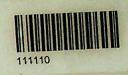




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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Insanity Fair

FROM the very evening of the release of the much awaited Thakkar Commission Report (March 27), it was clear that this would bring no cease-fire between the Government and the Opposition in Parliament or outside. If anything, it has intensified the prevailing mood of confrontation, and the Government would be hard put to justify its position either on the question of handling the Thakkar Report or on follow-up actions, expected of it.

The Government has yet to provide a convincing alibi why it so long held back the Interim Report though Justice Thakkar had specifically stated in the Final Report (submitted on February 17, 1986) that "there is no objection to the Interim Report being made public". It is to be noted that Justice Thakkar advised against the publication of only the Final Report in the "larger public interest". Secondly, after Rajiv Gandhi's explicit assurance that "there is no question of altering, tampering or touching up the Report in any way" and that it would be placed before Parliament as it was, the Government has released only two volumes and has held back three more. Thirdly, the Government has not placed before Parliament the Report of the Special Investigation Team (SIT) headed by Anand Ram, on the strength of which R.K. Dhawan was not only absolved of all the adverse references against him in the Thakkar Report but reinstated in the Government itself at a senior level. And the references to Dhawan were not just passing comments of Justice Thakkar but that the Commission had "formed the opinion that there are reasonable grounds to suspect the involvement of Shri R.K. Dhawan in the crime" - the actual words in the Report itself. It recommended "a sustained and deep probe" about Dhawan's motive.

As against this, the Memorandum of Action taken on the Thakkar Report placed before Parliament by the Ministry of Home Affairs, stated: "The SIT has concluded that Shri R.K. Dhawan had no hand in the conspiracy for the assassination of the then Prime Minister and that there is nothing to indicate that Shri R.K. Dhawan was in any way involved in the crime or the conspiracy." While the SIT on the basis of the investigation might be fully justified in this conclusion, it is obvious that this almost peremptory observation in the Home Ministry's Memorandum would by no means satisfy Parliament. The demand for the release of the SIT Report is therefore bound to be vociferous and the Government would find it very difficult to resist it without losing face before the public in an election year.

The question is bound to be raised by the Opposition — and even by Congress-I circles in private-that Dhawan was exonerated by the SIT which is not a judicial body but a purely executive probe; and as such what was the compelling necessity for the Prime Minister to bring him back to a relatively senior level post - a step over which. CC-0. In Public Domain, Gurukul Kangri Collection, Handwar Report dealing with Dhawan and withholding of the SIT Report absorving Sama Foundation Chernet and Reference and not on The one is amazed at the Government's naivete to expect that he can at all function under such clouds.

The theory is a such clouds the such clouds that he can at all function under such clouds.

All this is bound to lead to a sharp partisan approach towards the entire bureaucracy. While the Opposition would concentrate its fire on those agencies which in its view are providing alibi for the Government's actions, the Congress-I benches would loudly proclaim full support for them. In other words, these will be dragged into the squabbles of party politics in the election year, and thereby will lose heavily in their credibility. Already, the CBI has suffered considerable erosion in its standing in the manner it has conducted itself in the Bofors scandal. It has therefore been a grievous mistake on the part of the Government to have pitted a police investigation body like the SIT against the observations of a Commission of inquiry to justify its own action.

From even a preliminary perusal of whatever has been placed before Parliament, one gets a rather disturbing picture of the state of things during the last months of Indira Gandhi. There was a wall of suspicion and distrust between the President and the Prime Minister. Ministers were involved at sniping at the Prime Minister's confidential staff, even offering to secure their replacements. The Prime Minister was unsure about the loyalty of her long-trusted aide. Suspicions and misgivings about foreign intrigues had surfaced. Vigilance was weakened, and there was no careful supervision of the very staff entrusted with the security of the Prime Minister. Looking at this whole Byzantine scenario, one can hardly be surprised at the assassination of the head of the Government.

The conduct of the Commission itself raises issues of grave concern. The Commission makes an extraordinary observation that its Report "is based

an inquiry under Section 8B of the Commission of 1984 Inquiry Act, which is neither feasible nor practicesix m able". The Thakkar Report hardly throws any Interi light on the key question as to who killed Beanthree Singh and almost finished Satwant Singh, and why Febru In political assassinations the world over, theyears, assailants were bumped off by unseen hands, whose Thakl identity alone could lead to the conspiracies behind Now them. Nothing on this score has been unearthed hat t by the Thakkar Commission. At the same time, certai Justice Thakkar has gone in for recklessly looseAnan observations. A string of obiter dicta does not by ive p themselves amount to a serious verdict. In placethe ki of a considered well-reasoned report, he has gone in for the bazaar-level commentaries popular with the establishment at the time. It would not be unfair therefore to draw the inference that this pliant performance might have led the Rajiv Government subsequently to entrust him with the sensitive assignment of probing into the Fairfax affair.

A disturbing feature of the Thakkar Commission In G Report is the repeated admonition against engaging Sikh personnel on security duty. While the failure ANI of Indira Gandhi's security set-up lay in the shocking laxity in observing elementary rules of discipline and the amazing absence of constant checking and cross-on checking the record of the personnel drafted for In security duty, Justice Thakkar has repeatedly harpedon tr on the failure to remove Sikh security guards fromblame the proximity of Indira Gandhi. Such an astoundingfronta approach bordering on communal discrimination, is Minis not only thoughtless but unwarranted when one ndia takes into account the unblemished patriotic record Nepal of thousands of Sikh personnel in the armed forces Conse he tre in the defence of the country. t sho

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From Abu's File



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of on The Commission was appointed by Arya Samzifoundation Chennal and Gayout ems to be wiser after this, ion of 1984 with the mandate to submit its Report within actic six months. But it took one year to submit its any interim Report on November 19, 1985 and more than Beanthree months more to submit the Final Report on why February 17, 1986. Since then, for the last three theyears, the public was made to believe that the whose Thakkar Commission had done a thorough job. ehindNow the Government wants the public to believe arthed hat the Thakkar Report was really in the nature of time, certain tentative observations and it was only the looseAnand Ram Report that is to be taken as the definiot bylive pronouncement on the very important subject of placethe killing of the Prime Minister of India.

nothing final has come out of this protracted exercise. Impressions and prejudices, suspicions and misgivings persist and they will persist despite this enormous mountain of ungainful labour. If anything, Justice Thakkar has made a major contribution towards spreading confusion and demoralisation in the public mind, and this has been reinforced by the dismal record of the Rajiv Government in further forfeiting public confidence by its incapacity to handle the crisis brought about by its own malfeasance.

N.C.

March 29

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airfax ission Indo-Nepal Treaties: Some Crucial Questions

ailure ANIRUDHA GUPTA

cross-ON March 23, the two separate treaties between d for India and Nepal — one on trade and the other arpedon transit - expired and for this Indla squarely fromblamed Nepal. Describing Nepal's attitude as "connding rontationist", a spokesman of the External Affairs on, is Ministry said that "the current situation was not oneIndia's making" as it waited till the last moment for ecordNepal to initiate steps for the renewal of the treaty. forces Consequently, "there was no alternative but to allow he treaty to terminate". (Indian Express, March 24) t should be noted that the discussion is over two reaties, but the officials conveniently lump them into

Surprisingly, this self-justificatory claim was pickd up by the Indian press to start a vicious campaign gainst Nepal on every possible or imaginary ground! uddenly, the issues of commerce and transit faciliies between two sovereign states came to be linked vith Nepal's discriminatory treatment of Indian ationals as against India's "pampering" of Nepalese itizens who could own immovable property or join ny branch of state or para-military forces and ervices in India except the IAS, the IPS and the foreign Service. Moving backwards to press this point, a special correspondent of The Statesman eported (March 22): "Since April 1987, and even nore so since September last year, Nepal, according o informed sources, has imposed strict (?) work ermits for Indians. The result is that Indians are nding it difficult to open bank accounts. Teachers re being asked to leave. Indian interests in transort are considerable but Indian vehicles are not eing registered. All this amounts to de facto ban

The author is a Professor in the School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

on free movement of Indians in Nepal. While Nepalese are free to travel and live anywhere in India, Indians are forbidden to travel in a 10 km strip along the Sino-Nepalese border."

This was not enough. India's largesses to Nepal in terms of outright grants, loans and credits, besides mutual cooperation in such areas as the Kosi and Gandak projects, were cited to contrast India's good faith against Nepalese "misdeeds". At some point, all this had to be linked with Nepalese purchase of assault rifles, missiles and anti-aircraft guns from China.

So the renewal of Indo-Nepalese treaties came to be linked with a whole gamut of domestic and external issues which had little to do with commerce or transit facilities that a coastal state must provide to a landlocked state. Is it the intention of the South Block that Nepal must own up its gratitude by accepting whatever conditions India chooses to "offer" it in renewing and replacing two treaties by a single one? And, if this is not acceptable, Nepal must answer for its "misconduct" towards Indian nationals, towards Indian goods and towards any problem that impinges on Indian security! Finally, if Nepal "decides" to terminate the treaties on its own, India — as a transit country — is free to take any measure to block the passage of Nepalese goods and essentials anyway it likes! Already the newspapers are full of reports of how Nepalese are facing a scarcity of petroleum, kerosene and rice and how inflation is causing hardship to the common man in Nepal. And all this is being done by the press - at the behest of the South Block - with a vengeance to prove what giant India could do to little Nepal in case it fails to mend its ways!

But let us come to the substantive issues. India claims that it was Nepal which prevaricated and, therefore, allowed the treaties to terminate. But it is

- and initialled - by the officials of two Governments in October 1988 and that it was waiting to be signed by the Commerce Ministers sometime in March. This fact is not disputed by the government media.

A Times of India report (March 19) quoted a spokesman of the External Affairs Ministry to the effect that under the treaty renewal draft negotiated in October 1988, Nepal was expected to take "certain steps" before the formal signing could be done. If so, what were these "certain steps", and why did the said official not announce them? The same Times of India report says that the official "declined to elaborate" these conditions - but it did not take any time for him to blame Nepal for the non-renewal of the treaty!

No press correspondent even cared to examine the implications of this report. If India indeed negotiated a draft treaty (in October 1988) then the cases of employment restriction on Indians, or purchase of Chinese arms, etc. were already there. Yet, all this did not prevent officials of the Commerce Ministry from reaching an agreement with their Nepalese counterparts on the provisions of a new trade treaty. What happened then - between October 1988 and March 1989 — in a span of barely four months? At what point did the Ministry of External Affairs intervene and snatch the whole matter from the Com-

merce Ministry?

There are too many things one would like to know before giving a clear chit to the External Affairs Ministry officials. Could one possibly guess the basic motives behind their conduct? Having agreed to a draft trade treaty, the Government of India suddenly woke up to the fact that the other treaty on transit was also due to lapse in March! If so, a final signing on the first could be delayed and, in the penultimate stage, India should ask Nepal to accept a single in place of two separate treaties - which is what India had all along been planning! At such a stage, when the problem of transit becomes all important, Nepal would have no choice but to buckle under Indian pressure! Apart from the morality factor, what legal ground had India to demand that Nepal could do with one instead of two treaties as indeed it had achieved in 1978? Can one country unilaterally abrogate treaty obligations towards another country, especially when the latter is relatively a weak landlocked country? Who should be the judge in such a case? If Nepal says that transit issues must be taken up separately from trade — since they affect its development as a landlocked country - have we the right to imperiously dismiss this as well as deny it the legal rights it had securred ten years ago?

But even this is a minor matter. Worse is the official claim that if the transit treaty lapses, India gets free from any obligation towards Nepal as a landlocked country. Not only that: India can cut off all but one transit point for Nepal, stop its essential supplies and in fact simply make Nepal's

life miserable!

Can India do all this irrespective of whether the transit treaty expires or not? One simple answer is: 'No'. India cannot violate what has already come

on record that a draft treaty or record treaty or record to the draft treaty or record tr the relations between the landlocked and the transi countries. In all important fora of the world including the UN, the UNCTAD and the nonaligned, the problems faced by the landlocked countries have received importance over the years and a a UN legal counseller pointed out: "There is now well-developed body of law giving landlocked states as a matter of necessity, the right of access to and from the sea and the freedom of transit through transit state." Further, and more importantly, he in ac observed: "It is necessary to seek ways and mean Acco to ensure that the right is not arbitrarily abrogated or necessary obstacles placed in the way of land peace locked states by countries of transit."

The trend in international law, especially after the Sovie signing of the Convention on the Law of the Sea, is persi that transit facilities and access to and from the secon Ja by a landlocked country must be treated as a righ Kunand not as a privilege. "The historic position of the Ne landlocked states," asserts an African legal expert the r "has been that their right of access to and from the the U sea is a fundamental right of sovereign states, not draw conditional privilege." As a signatory to the Con lapse vention, could India deny its expanding obligation have towards the two landlocked states of Nepal an giver Bhutan? It must clearly be remembered that listin and previous recommendations and Convention on the casua Law of the Sea and in particular reference to the are n interests and protection of the landlocked coun triba tries, the 1983 New Delhi Non-Aligned Summikufrs noted that "in order to ensure the right of fre godle access to and from sea and freedom of transit as proparla vided for in Article 125 of the Law of the Sea Cor parer vention" all necessary assistance must be provide Pak by transit states to meet the special need of the land fight locked countries.

Let us take a pause: by claiming that India ca tilted do this or that to deprive Nepal of transit rights, the officials of the External Affairs Ministry and the feren political bosses are taking the country to the preci Sovie pice of flouting all international norms and conver 1979 tions. By insisting that Nepal's interests could the v best served by a single comprehensive treaty, the enter are setting an example of how obligations toward the l landlocked states could be contemptuously replimate diated. The substantive issues in the present Indireque Nepalese crisis are much bigger than the Govern Amin ment would like us to believe. In the meanwhill or th Nepal has all the force of international law to insifull of that as a landlocked country its rights of access | Sovie and transit for trade with countries other than Indidecri (which must stay customs free) cannot be dispute these by a country which allows it sole access to the se non-After all, such right of access is only a means to a back end. International law, as envisaged by the 198 ters (Convention, is moving faster and much further the C accord the landlocked states "the necessary facility that for the practical realisation of their rights in thits pa of gl exploration and exploitation of ocean resources".

Should India oppose such trends? Or, should Afgh move with the spirit of the time and take concre be the steps towards the building of peace, cooperatio was, and goodwill among nations - as Jawaharl behin

Nehru once taught us?

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Afghanistan: Pak Military Adventurism

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More than a month has elapsed since the withough a
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f land
for the control of the Geneva
accords on Afghanistan. The Accords have no doubt,
going by the latest turn of events, failed to procure
peace in that battle-torn, war-ravaged country. The
apprehensions of a bloodier civil war following the
sea, is
the set on Jalalabad, Kandahar, Herat, Khost, Gardez and
right
Kunduz.

of the Nevertheless, the hopes — assiduously nurtured by expert the rebel chieftains and their patrons in Pakistan and om the US — that within a month of the Soviet withnot drawal the Najibullah regime in Kabul would cole Con lapse ignominously have been belied. Not only gation have the Najibullah Government's armed forces al an given sufficient testimony of their fighting prowess listin and capacity for survival, they have inflicted heavy on the casualties on the jehad mongering mujahideen who to the are mostly motivated by fundamentalist outlook and coun tribal fanaticism propelling them to eliminate the ummi kufrs that had collaborated with the detestable and of fre godless Shauravis (as the Soviets are called in Afghan as proparlance). Indeed it is becoming increasingly transa Con parent that without the growing involvement of the ovide Pak military regulars (whose participation in the e land fighting has already been conclusively established by the Afghan authorities) the scales of battle cannot be ia caltilted in favour of the rebels.

hts, the That brings us to the question of direct interd the ference in Afghanistan's internal affairs. When the prec Soviet troops landed on Afghan soil on December 27, onver 1979 it was not done surreptitiously. Moscow let ould the whole world know that the Soviet soldiers had y, the entered Afghanistan in response to an invitation by oward the Kabul administration (though there was legitirepl mate confusion about who had forwarded the t Indi request — the erstwhile head of state Hafizullah Gover Amin who was subsequently deposed and liquidated, nwhiltor the person succeeding him, Babrak Karmal?) in insi full conformity with the provisions of the Afghanccess Soviet Treaty of 1978. Politically the action was n Ind decried and denounced in several world capitals and ispute these included the headquarters of a large number of the se non aligned Third World states as well. In fact looking to a back in retrospect it is now acknowledged in all quarne 198 ters (and even those sympathetic to the USSR as also rther the Gorbachev set-up in the Soviet capital itself) that acilitithat step of Moscow constituted a major blunder on in thits part in not being able to comprehend the extent of global hostility and the magnitude of the common ould Afghans' wrath such an intervention would invite. But oncre be that as it may, howsoever inexonerable the action peratiowas, none could condemn it as a stealthy move vaharl behind the back of the UN and trampling underfeet international law.

Contrast that step with what the Pakistani autho-

rities, notably the personnel of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) (and not only they), are doing in Afghanistan today. The fact, however, remains that they are doing exactly the same as what the Soviets did in Afghanistan at the fag end of 1979. Nonetheless, the Pak activities on that score are more reprehensible as they are being conducted in a clandestine fashion giving them the character of illegality. The denials from Islamabad are weak and routine and cannot for a moment stand scrutiny in the wake of the powerful evidence that Kabul has furnished about direct participation of Pak personnel in the heavy and ferocious fighting especially in the vicinity of Jalalabad, Afghanistan's easternmost city and once its winter capital. Their interference in Afghanistan is testified even by Western correspondents by no means unsympathetic to the cause

The Western press was for long taking a onesided position with regard to the contending parties in the Afghan conflict. Its tilt was obviously on the side of the mujahideen which, unlike the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK) that was fighting the Vietnamese-backed Heng Samrin Government of the People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK) shortly after the ouster of the Pol Pot-leng Sary rule in Kampuchea with the Vietnameses intervention in that country — had not been able to hammer out a coalition government of the rebel forces fighting Soviet occupation of Afghanistan for the last nine years. This was basically due to the strong differences among them and deep-rooted suspicion of each other. Even the recent arrangement of the Pakistan-backed mujahideed groups - that is, the setting up of an interim government — does not promise to be of a durable nature as the subjective contradictions among the rebel forces are very sharp and they do not see eye to eye with each other on a host of issues; while the Iran-backed rebels walked out of the shoora held near Islamabad. The latest recognition accorded to the interim government by a few Gulf states like Saudi Arabia and its inclusion in the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) notwithstanding, the Pakistan-backed rebels have yet to demonstrate their authority. Their inability to capture Jalalabad and to hold their "cabinet meeting" at any place substantially within Afghan territory (that is, quite far from the Pak frontier) are eloquent testimony of their limited influence.

In this context considerable importance is attached to the agreement between Moscow and Teheran in renewing efforts to bring about peace in Afghanistan. This is indicative of the ability of the Islamic Government in Iran to realise the change in the political scenario of the region following the withdrawal of the Seviet troops from Afghanistan. In

giving a fair trial to the policy of national reconciliation proclaimed by Dr Najibullah, the Afghan President. This appears to be the present position of Iran. It would doubtless help to reinforce the cause of peace in Afghanistan through the formation of a broadbased government there free of any form of foreign interference.

Of no less importance are the deals the Kabul Government of Dr Najibullah have been able to strike with the local commanders of rebel groups operating within Afghanistan. The one it recently concluded with Ahmad Shah Masoud to ensure the flow of supplies along the Salang highway has attracted wide attention. Close observers of the Afghan scene have not failed to notice that this agreement with Masoud (one of the most dedicated Afghan mujahideen leaders whose selfless crusade against foreign, that is, Soviet, occupation of Afghanistan earned him encomiums even from certain sections of political leaders and administrators in Kabul) took place around the time the Najibullah regime was able to beat back the first round of rebel onslaughts on Jalalabad. (However, the subsequent attacks by Masoud's men on the Salang highway highlight the tenuous nature of such a truce.) Valuable too is the information that in the Kandahar region mujahideen attacks are being repulsed only by the Afghan armed forces but even rebels belonging to a certain tribe under the influence of Iran. These convincingly prove the hollowness of the Pak-based mujuhideen claims that they control in effect 85 per cent of the Afghan territory.

Yet another significant development is the fact that democratic forces within Pakistan are not sitting idle. Lately a number of public meetings have taken place in various parts of the country protesting against the present Pak policy on Afghanistan and calling for its reversal forthwith. Such a development, a byproduct of the democratic process set in motion in Pakistan, carries with it far-reaching implications that would become evident with the passage

of time.

The direct Pakistani involvement in the affairs of Afghanistan has in recent weeks assumed a new dimension no doubt, but it follows much the same pattern as the Pak interference in Punjab. In Afghanistan, the Pak military leaders today dream of a fundamentalist regime in Kabul, even if that dream has of late suffered heavy blows in the light of the reality of Dr Najibullah's capability to hit back with considerable force. In Punjab, the same military leaders are trying to realise a separate state of Khalistan outside the Indian Union in a bid to dismember India and thus weaken it. Both these moves are sought to be justified in the name of Pakistan's security. And both enjoy (despite Western reticence to speak out in the case of Punjab), in varying degrees, material support from Pakistan's Western patrons, notably the Pentagon. The threats emanating from the Pak military circles to both Afghanistan and India are thus genuine, and even if Ms Benazir Bhutto's sweet words about Rajiv Gandhi and India sound pleasant to the Indian ear she has till now

the altered situation there should be about the preeminence in terms of strength and ability to prevent the Pak President (a close aide of Zia-ul Haq and one of the exponents of the Zia strategy for a Pakistan-Afghanistan confederation) or the armed forces to call the shots. However, her spirited and successful struggle against the ISI's meddling in Pakistan's domestic affairs is not totally without meaning and thus it would be a grievous error to treat Benazir as the handmaiden of either the Pak military or the White House.

What is of urgent necessity is to raise the voice of the peaceloving public in our region and the world we ta at large to warn Pakistan of the serious consequences of its interference in the affairs of neighbouring and t states, more particularly of Afghanistan at the moment (although its role against India in Punjab which should not be ignored at any given point of time). Ithopes is in this context that the appeal of Wali Khan, a Very redoubtable Pak democrat, a veteran political leader, being son of the immortal 'Frontier Gandhi' Khan Abdul hat o Ghaffar Khan and head of the Awami National oon Party of Pakistan, to the UN Secretary-General is Too

specially noteworthy. In a strongly worded letter to Javier Perez deus tra Cuellar, Wali Khan accused the military circles in abric Pakistan of "blatant intervention" in the affairs of hies Afghanistan. While making a subtle distinction ddict between those circles and the Benazir Bhutto Govern-Admi ment on the issue, he charged the former with heir attempts to install a government in Kabul against Dur the wishes of the Afghan populace, adding: "For this oura purpose they (the Pak military circles) have started ribute the war of cities. To capture Jalalabad, they are bent han' upon drenching it in a bloodbath. Our people are akist witness to a daily transport of weapons and other than supplies in military trucks to Afghanistan."

Elaborating further, the Pak nationalist leader ere t underlined: "The militarists are recruiting the Afghan ntil t refugees as cannon fodder and are forcibly inducting ur me them into the war against Jalalabad. The US andhe ger Arab nationalists are there as advisers while theur de Pakistan Army is preparing the war strategy and pjoying executing it under its command. All this is being Tod done either to obliterate the Afghan nation or break ow to the country if their will to impose a fundamentalistiow. regime is not realised."

Presenting this grim scenario, Wali Khan has nego sought, in his letter to de Cuellar, the immediate at in intervention of the UN Secretary-General to stopiretal bloodshed in Afghanistan and help materialise a meric broadbased government there through an intra-puting Afghan dialogue.

The least that India, as a friend of the Pakistan the people and the promoter of peace in our neighbour-vern hood, can do is to complement Wali Khan's appealolitica with specific steps to halt the bloodshed in Afghanis meh tan through the aegis of the UNO. Of course India's res b decision to send humanitarian aid to Kabul has been cord widely welcomed by all persons of goodwill in our ther region. But it has much more to do than just des-orld patch such assistance (keeping in view the largest me number of Afghans of Indian origin in that country Pakis facing the prospect of a bloodbath; and these are es no

(Continued on page 35)

COMMUNICATION

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and Pakistani Democrat's Call for Peace in Afghanistan

ce of accountable to the people of Pakistan. Hence world we take the advantage of pointing out a few things which are of considerable importance to Pakistan uring and to our security.

When we acheived independence, we had dreams unjab which we wanted to be fulfilled, but very soon our e.). It hopes were shattered and our beliefs knocked down. It has seader, being sacrificed at the altar of neo-colonialism and abdul hat our independence was going to be forfeited as tional oon as it was decided by the imperialist powers.

ral is Today we cannot afford to sit back and not speak put because somebody might turn around and call ex de is traitors. We call all those who destroyed the very les in abric of our society in the last twelve years as eners of pies of our country. They introduced us to heroin action addiction, guns, smuggling and in this the American overn-Administration connived without shame, because with heir own strategic interests were involved.

gainst During the Bangladesh crisis, we women had the rethis ourage to go out into the Lahore streets and distarted ribute pamphlets telling our people that Yahya be bent chan's military adventure in Bangladesh will destroy are akistan. But some advisers were telling Yahya other chan that it would be better to part ways and that akistan will be better off without the Bengalis. We eader ere taken to courts, dubbed as traitors and agents, fghan ntil the fall of Dhaka. Then people realised that acting ur media was just telling a pack of lies and that and to generals who were saying "we will surrender over the ur dead bodies" were surrendering with a smile and and njoying jokes with their counterparts.

being Today the most important issue facing Pakistan is break bw to deal with the Afghan issue, whether to ntalist low America to play their game and have the fghans shed Afghan blood or to advice our guests has negotiate with Najibullah and have a dialogue so ediate at innocent blood is not shed, to form a broadbased stop retaker government and then have elections. The ise a mericans are allergic to Najibullah; hence we will intra-ontinue helping the Afghans to fight and kill each her! But let us not forget that we are signatories cistan the Geneva Accords, and that all respectable bour-vernments value and regard such accords. Also all ppealolitical parties gave full support to the Accords. nanis-pmehow Zia-ul Haq had no respect for any signandia's res but the present Government should study the been cords and persuade our Foreign Office to abide our them, so that we have some cerdibility in the t des-orld community, and the world community does largest mean only America.

untry Pakistan is on flimsy ground when it says that it are es not recognise the Afghan Government. In the

Agreement on Principles of Mutual Relations the Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan have proclaimed each other as "the high contracting parties". Article 11 of this Agreement binds the signatories to "respect the sovereign and inalienable right of the other high contracting party freely to determine its own political, economic and cultural and social systems ... without outside intervention, interference, subversion, coercion or threat in any form whatsoever".

What we have agreed to is: to refrain from the threat or use of force...to overthrow or change the political system. But what are we doing today? Fighting, killing, destroying at the behest of our masters thousands of miles away.

We have also signed the following: "To prevent within its territory the presence, harbouring in camps or bases or otherwise, organising, training, financing, equipping and arming of individuals and political. ethnic and any other groups for the purpose of creating subversion, disorder or unrest in the territory of the other ... and accordingly also to prevent the use of mass media and transportation of arms, ammunition and equipment by such individuals and groups". What is happening in Peshawar today? Exactly the opposite, as if no Geneva Accord existed. Just to go on saying that we are implementing the Geneva Accords does not make us believe what our Foreign Office says. It has very little credibility and we know that we are always fooled when higher authority gets involved. The campaign is being run by Inter-Services Intelligence, which was Zia's baby, and we strongly feel that their plans are deterimental to the well-being of Pakistan.

Again we women demonstrated in Lahore on March 15, 1989 against the policies of the Pakistan Government which was bringing war closer to us and which seems to pursue the policies of Zia that destroyed Pakistan. He had the ambition to become the Khaleefa of Pakistan and Afghanistan and then lure the Soviet Muslims. Today the Soviet Muslims are enjoying the freedom of learning, freedom to educate their women, to have shelter, to reach high scientific stature in the Soviet Union. I am sure they would not like to return to medievalism where their women could be sold, where women have no status and are treated equally only with cattle.

I am sending this letter to you (Mainstream) because our free press does not publish such things. I have frequently sent letters on this issue which nobody published except Frontier Post when it had a respectable editor, who had the courage of conviction and hence his services were terminated.

Our organisation will continue to bring truth for-

ward to the people. A few day back Wall Khan, of nower until it is too late Bizenjo, Abid Hassan Manto addressed the Lahore audience and told them that the present Afghan policy would be ruinous for Pakistan. We only hope that somebody in the Foreign Office heard their

of power until it is too late. March 19, 1989

Tahira Mazhar Bic General Secretary

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Democratic Women's Association, Pakistan 3 Shah Jamal Street No. 3, Lahore-1K.R

PAKISTANI LEADERS AT LAHORE MEET

Islamabad's Afghan Policy Flayed

SPEAKERS at a seminar on Afghanistan and Geneva Accords held on March 13 in Lahore called upon the Pakistan Government to desist from involving itself in the affairs of Afghanistan and let the Afghans settle their own affairs.

Khan Abdul Wali Khan, President of the Awami National Party, said that Afghan refugees in Pakistan should have been psychologically prepared for a return to their homeland after the signing of Geneva Accords. But this had not been done. He said that the "maulvis" claiming to liberate Afghanistan would not be able to cow down the brave Afghans who could not be subjugated even by the British.

He said that the late General Zia had remained in power for 11 years only because of the Afghanistan problem and his death was also connected with it. He said that Zia did not speak about Islam in the beginning but started championing its cause to strengthen his grip on power after the Afghan revolution. Zia started raising the slogans of Islam after the Soviet Army came to Afghanistan but he never thought of helping the Palestinians.

He said that the holding of the meeting of the so-called Afghan Parliament in Islamabad was open

interference in the affairs of Afghanistan.

Wali Khan said that Durand Line had lost its significance due to the Afghan situation and people from Pakistan crossed into Afghanistan without any passport or visa. People could also cross into Pakistan from the other side and create serious problems

He agreed with the proposal made by Abid Hassan Minto that progressive forces should sink their differences and unite for greater national interests. He said that Nawaz Sharifs men were sitting in Peshawar and purchasing the scrap iron coming from Afghanistan where development projects were being destroyed.

Mir Ghaus Bux Bizenjo, President of the Pakistan National Party, said that formation of the so-called Afghanistan Parliament in Islamabad was a clear interference in the affairs of that country. He said that bloodshed in Afghanistan was an imperialist

conspiracy.

Bizenjo said that the Baluch and Pashtoons lived on both sides of the Pakistan-Afghanistan frontier. "We are fighting against two of our own nationalities by interfering in Afghanistan to please the Americans," he said.

He said that the MRD adopted a resolution.

against interference in Afghanistan when Zia was il conqui power. But the Geneva Accords were signed during of national Zia's tenure and their was now greater interference nature in Afghanistan under the PPP which was among the said that the nature of the nature those opposed to the interference. He said that that the protection is the interference. He said that the protection is the interference in the said that the protection is the interference. He said that the protection is the interference in the said that the protection is the interference in the said that the protection is the interference in the said that the protection is the protection is the protection is the said that the protection is mean that interference in Afghanistan had nowith become justified.

C.R. Aslam, President of the Pakistan Socializather Party, said that it was not only the government that the had changed in Afghanistan but a political anespeci socio-economic revolution had also accompanied iand The Americans had hatched a conspiracy to destrothis s the Afghan revolution and Gen Zia named it jehad, the g He said that now the foreign forces had leand g

Afghanistan and Najib'was inviting his opponents the b form a broad-based government in the country, the lso is was no reason to oppose him any further. He salasia, that agents of General Zia claimed that they hathe sp liberated 95 per cent Afghan territory but they neven ea

dared to go there.

Abid Hassan Minto, Secretary General of thath of Pakistan Workers Party, said efforts were being madef pe to spread prejudice in the country in the name partic religion to stifle democracy and liberalism. The wdomir against Kabul was being described as a war betwee Of Islam and 'kufr', but those crusading against kufr-technology illhad' could not say that anything anti-Islamic Wequir happening in Afghanistan where women had beof ag emancipated, education was being spread annergy workers and peasants had been given their rights. Impor

He said that the Punjab Chief Minister, Nawthe re Sharif, and Amir of Jama'at i-Islami, Qazi Hussaritica Ahmad, had taken out a so-called victory processicandi after the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanimpre tan. Both of them were the products of GenerChina Zia's rule which had brought Kalashnikov and herearth in in Pakistan.

Ehsan Wyne, Vice-President of the Awarxploi National Party, said that it was strange that thity h Provincial President of the Pakistan Muslim Leaguiotec was talking about offering prayers in Kabul at was celebrating the conquest of Afghanistan after t signing of the Geneva Accords during the tenure its President, former Prime Minister Muhamma Khan Junejo. He said that the USSR had withdraw its forces from Afghanistan after the Gene Accords. Now the blood of Afghan brothers w being spilled to safeguard American interests in t region. (Courtesy: Viewpoint, Lahor MAIN

Scie on ' Pac Ma of h

Biotechnology and Asian Agriculture

hore-IK.R. NARAYANAN

A GRICULTURE was the first industry evolved by mankind and, perhaps, the first manifestation of ts cultural instincts, and Asia one of its earliest homes. And biotechnology is the latest technology, what we call a frontier technology, that is capable of transforming in a revolutionary manner both agri-

culture and industry. Human progress has often been described as the was i conquest of nature by man, the taming of the forces during of nature and the harnessing of the resources of ference hature to the chariot wheels of human necessity and amon human purpose. We now know that progress lies, hat the not only in conquering and exploiting nature, but in it waprotecting it tenderly, in preserving its complex and in delicate balance, and in being in essential harmony nowith it. Shakespeare said of art as that which "adds ocializather; but the art itself is nature". Today one can nt that ay this even more appropriately of science, al an especially of the new biology, genetic engineering ied land biotechnology. But as Shakespeare put it destrothis science itself must be conceived as nature iehad. the great creating nature" — which kindly joins on id leand grows out of nature, in creative munificence for ents the benefit of mankind. This is a concept that is , the also in accord with the fundamental philosophy of le salAsia, of the unity of man and nature, of matter and ey hathe spirit, and the interdependent progression of life

y neven earth. The significance of the oncoming bioevolution is that it can take mankind along this of thath of development, affecting the lives of millions g made people, and offering hope and opportunities, me particularly for the developing countries so prehe wdominantly dependent on the fruits of agriculture.

etwee Of the varied and far-reaching applications of biokufr-technology, what is most relevant and immediately ic wrequired for the Asian region, are in the basic field d beof agriculture, though its applications in industry, d amnergy and human health are by no means less thts. important. The exploding population growth, and Nawthe relative scarcity of cultivable land, have created Hussacritical problems for Asian agriculture, notwithcessictanding the green revolution in India and the ghanimpressive advance of agricultural production in GenerChina and other countries of the region. The ancient d herearth of Asia is so much overburdened by the

lensity of population, and has been so ruthlessly Awar xploited for so long, that further rise in productinat thity has to come mainly, from the addition of new Leagniotechnologies to conventional methods, for pro-

> The author who is the Minister of State, Science and Technology, inaugurated a seminar on "Public Policy Implications of Biotechnology on Asian Agriculture" organised by the Asian-Pacific Development Centre, at New Delhi on March 6, 1989. This article is based on the text of his inaugural address at the seminar.

ducing increased amounts of food, fuel, fibre and other bio-products. It seems, we have to turn to biotechnology in a systematic way and with a sense of urgency, within a well-thought-out policy framework and with a practical programme of research,

development and application.

Scientists have cemonstrated the possibility through genetic manipulation to increase the rate of photosynthesis in order to hasten the growth of plants and augment the yield of crops Obviously this is an area of genetic engineering that requires special attention in the Asian region. It may be somewhat futuristic, but the case of the transgenic pig indicates the long-term prospect of developing animals that grow fast, eat less and give more lean meat. At any rate animal breeding through biotechnology is today a demonstrated technology. In India - in fact at the National Institute of Immunology - successful embryo transfer in cows through non-surgical means has been achieved to produce a better breed of cattle. Tissue culture technology in plants is already in widespread use in the world. For the Asian region and in the developing countries as a whole, it is particularly relevant for application in oil palm, coconut, banana, tubers etc. It can also be used for growing and multiplying rapidly elite plants and trees. I am told that one cubic centrimetre of single green cell in a bioreactor can give rise to a million plants.

This is a biotechnological breakthrough that can help us in replenishing lost forests, in greening wastelands and deserts, and in carrying out agro-

forestry programmes.

Genetic engineering is evolving plants and crops that are tolerant to harsh weather conditions like drought and to salinity and alkalinity of the soil. It is also producing disease-and pestresistant varieties of plants, and through nitrogen fixation plants that can produce their own fertilisers. These developments in biotechnology are of far-reaching significance to Asian agriculture, In South and South East Asia it has been estimated that over 86 million hectares of land are affected by salinity and alkalinity. Pests and diseases are destroying a sizeable proportion of our crops, and we are awefully short of chemical fertilisers which most developing countries have to import by spending precious foreign exchange. Besides, chemical pesticides and fertilisers are hazardous to human beings and to the environment. It has been estimated that the United States of America spends annually around 6.5 billion dollars on pesticides, weedisides and herbicides. And yet the value of crops destroyed by pests remains, ironically, the same as before the pesticides were invented, the pests having developed immunity to the chemical concotions. But in the bargain the chemicals, polluting the rivers and wells and the sources of water are posing serious health hazards to the people. Chemical

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fertilisers and pose environmentialized by Anys Sanial Coundation at the wheel so that we a drain on the foreign exchange reserve of the developing world. Without running down that vitally important and in many respects, life-saving and lifeimproving chemical industry, there is one sense in which the phrase "the brutal chemical technology" can be applied to it. Of course every industry may be "brutal" unless it is hedged in by pecautionary devices and measures against human and environmental hazards and counter-balanced by art and culture.

The new methods and techniques of biotechnology offer, to some extent, alternatives to the ill-effects of chemical pesticides, weedisides and herbisides, and chemical fertilisers. Drought-resistant, disease-resistant, and pest-resistant varieties of plants and crops are today within the reach of genetic engineering, and also plants that produce their own fertilisers. There is also the eminently practicable prospect of generating new resources from the enormous agricultural wastes, which would, incidentally but significantly, open up avenues of decentralised rural industrialisation in developing countries. One great advantage is that, though biotechnology is not danger free, in its application to agriculture it is not hazardous to the environment, and it would, at the same time, reduce costs of production, and enhance the productivity of plants and crops and of the

strictly limited commodity that is land.

Genetic engineering and biotechnology today is almost the monopolistic preserve of the advanced industrialised countries of the world. Research and development as well as production and marketing are in their hands, particularly in the hands of the great multinational companies. Recently they have asserted intellectual property rights and extended patent protection to biotechnologically-based innovations including life saving drugs, vaccines, seed and plant varieties, animals and even higher forms of life. Developing countries have to deal with this monopolising trend, individually and collectively, through correct policy formulation. The invasion of private capitalistic commercialisation into biotechnological research and development is something that is pregnant with danger especially if it is extended to the patenting of higher life-forms. The claim of intellectual property rights over genetically engineered higher life forms could well forbode the remote beginnings of a new biotechnologically-based slaveowning system. Obviously the distortions, the misdirection and the misuse of this powerful new technology has to be vigilantly guarded against as much against as the attempt of the industrialised nations to develop it in disregard of the interests of the developing countries.

There is no way of doing this except through indigenous and endogenous research and development, through what is called South-South cooperation, through cooperation with international organisations and also with the developed countries themselves on terms of equality and mutual benefit.

Everything ought to begin with work in our own individual countries, by our own research institutions and governments. If we only sit and wait for the fruits of R&D of the advanced nations on the ground

do not have to reinvent it, then we would miss the bus of the new biotechnological revolution as w missed the technological revolutions in the pass Fortunately several countries in the third world, Indi-KISI Brazil, China, Mexico, Cuba, Malaysia, Thailand Indonesia, Philippines etc., have developed the infras tructure as well as the scientific-technological com THE petence to interact meaningfully within the frame work of collective self-reliance. Governments have to pro take conscious decisions to promote biotechnologicand th research and development as a thrust area. Fortunant the tely this is an area which does not require very large 989-9 investments making an impact.

India has embarked upon an active programmural p for the promotion of genetic engineering and bio ural r technology studies and research, and their applica tions in priority areas of agriculture, industry to in energy, health and environment. We have today full-fledged Department of Biotechnology within the pro Minisiry of Science and Technology. And we havity of prestigious institutions like the National Institute agro-in Immunology, New Delhi, the Centre for Genetic Enf inte gineering at the Institute of Science, Bangalore, anthe los Genetic Engineering Units established at the Madule rai Kamaraj University, and the Jawaharlal Nehrsector University, New Delhi, In the agricultural sector, throm University, New Delhi. In the agricultural sector, the Indian Council of Agricultural Research has carried one pioneering work which was at the root of Indian one out pioneering work which was at the root of India Green Revolution and which is totay opening untilisin new vistas for our agricultural development. Th Department of Biotechnology is operating pilot pro jects in oil palm as part of our Prime Minister ervice Technology Mission on Oilseeds. Tissue culturarious techniques are being employed to raise the quality arees and yield in respect of cardamom, bamboo, ric Develo sugarcane mulberry, banana, tea, eucalyptus, sanda locks wood and potatoes. Apart from its application others food crops and cash crops, tissue culture technique ojgar is proposed to be used for increased production progra biomass and forest regeneration. Biofertilizer ive en biological control of pests, cattle herd improvementamily through embryo transfer technology, animal birtackwa control vaccine, acquaculture etc., are some of the But major programmes relating to the broad field ised fr agriculture. Human resource development occupi harge a central position in India's biotechnology proax pay gramme as we believe that educated and trained mob manpower is the basic prerequisite for the success 1989-96 our programmes in this frontier technology are In In It involves education and training in India and omina abroad, and in exchanges and interaction amorpuched scientists at the national and international level.

At the end of this national effort, and Southat tax South cooperation as well as wider internation onal cooperation we see a bright future for the appras no cation of biotechnology for the benefit of malax ag kind. I am not drawing the picture of a bi ealised technological paradise, but when I contemplate the raise ultimate fruits of this new branch of science appral ri technology, I recall the lines of the poet who sar of an imaginary land:

Where there is neither death nor age And the poor have all the money. The wells are full of wi (Continued on page 5

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miss the Poor hit by Inflationary Budget

d, India KISHOR SAMAL

frame speech, that the budget proposals are oriented have to protect the consumption standard of the poor; ologicand the goal of social justice has been demonstrated of the major initiatives. The major initiative in the ery large 1989-90 budget is in the area of the rural sector, ostensibly to boost the farm sector and help the gramm ural poor, but with a hidden objective of wooing the and bio ural masses for the coming general elections.

I

ithin the provision of cheaper loan, increase in the quantive has the provision of cheaper loan, increase in the quantive has the provision of cheaper loan, increase in the quantive has the provision of cheaper loan, increase in the quantity of agricultural credit and fiscal incentives to agro-industries. It has proposed to, reduce the rate of interest (from 12.5-14 per cent to 12 per cent) for the loan from Rs 15,000 to Rs 25,000, to increase he quantity of credit available to the agricultural and Nehr sector under direct finance by public sector banks from 17 to 18 per cent of their total outstanding divances thereby supplying additional credit to the une of Rs 4,000 crores in 1989-90; and to give fiscal necentives to food-processing industries and industries at tilising wastage taken in the pre-and post-harvest and to give fixed the pre-and post-harvest to the total outlay for rural development, assisted.

inister revices and on food and cloth subsidies under cultur arious programmes such as the free distribution of quality areas to destitute women, the Integrated Child evelopment Service Programme to cover 500 more sandal locks, the Jawaharlal Nehru Rojgar Yojana and ation there will be Rs 8374 crores. The Jawaharlal Nehru chinique rojgar Yojana, conceived by merging the existing croin organismes, that is, the NREP and the RLEGP will retilized ive employment to at least one member of each coverner amily living below the poverty line in 120 selected and birt ackward districts by providing additional funds.

hal birt ackward districts by providing additional funds. He of the But the fund for this programme will not be mobifield used from the agricultural sector. Instead, a surpoccupic harge at the rate of eight per cent on the resident gy proax payers with income above Rs 50,000 is proposed trained mobilise resources to the tune of Rs 500 crores in ccess (1989-90 for this programme.

dy are. In India, the rural rich farmers are one of the dia all ominant interest groups. Hence they are not amorpouched to mobilise resources for the above provel. Tramme. Even the long-term Fiscal Policy observes a South hat taxing agricultural income will create conceptation in all problems and hence the Central Government as applias no intention to change the present structure to of malax agricultural income. But there is a need, as a bigalised by the Planning Commission, to find ways plate that raising revenues by tapping the incomes of the ence affural rich in greater measure.

The author is a Lecturer in Economics in the P.G. Department of Economics, G.M. College, Sambalpur, Orissa.

Again, whatever may be the source of resources for the agricultural and rural development programmes and the anti-poverty measures, pumping additional funds or distributing saris will not be able to ensure a spurt in rural and agricultural development or help to alleviate poverty. Various studies on the NREP and the RLEGP show that they have not been effective either in removing improving employment facilities. These poverty alleviation programmes, whatever maybe the nomenclature, suffer primarily from a lack of conceptual clarity and an adequate understanding of the complex nature of the circumstances in which these programmes have to be implemented. Operational difficulties in the strategy adopted have been observed by various evaluation studies. There is also rampant corruption in the implementation of these programmes. More than half of the resources earmarked for these programmes fail to achieve what they are supposed to.

In spite of these rural development and antipoverty programmes, the percentage of rural labour households in the agricultural sector has been increasing. Moreover, the inequality in the distribution of rural assets and land is worsening thereby gradually leading to proletarisation of the small peasants.

In this scenario, the steps suggested in the 1989-90 budget will no way help in reducing rural poverty, rather it will perpetuate rural poverty. Proper steps for removal of poverty in rural areas and increasing agricultural production are: (i) land reform and equitable distribution of rural assets; and (ii) spread of canal irrigation. These steps alone will help the marginal and poor farmers as well as the agricultural labourers. In fact, the anti-poverty and rural development programmes were initiated to divert the attention from land reform measures and to help the rich farmers.

Resources for canal irrigation. etc. can be available by taxing agricultural income. But neither in the 1989-90 budget nor in earlier budgets steps have been taken to tax the rural rich since they are treated as the sacred cow.

TT

Not only is agricultural income not taxed in the 1989-90 budget, but even the corporation tax is not touched to mobilise additional revenue. But Finance Minister S. B. Chavan proposed an additional taxation of Rs 1287 crores which will lead to a rise in the general price level and ultimately affect the poor for whom he has paid lip services in Part A of his budget speech. The upward revision of specific duty rates of a large number of commodities by five per cent of current rates will alone yield an additional revenue of Rs 220 crores. There is also the proposal to collect additional revenue to the tune of Rs 792.18 crores from excise alone on various items.

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ll of will page 3.

These steps will no doubt pristing the Sarres Foundation Thering and security of steel per tonne by about the steel per tonne by abo fact, the Government is relying more and more on indirect taxes the burden and incidence of which will fall on common men. In the 1989-90 budget, the share of all indirect taxes in the total tax revenue is 81.48 per cent compared to 72.6 per cent in 1970-71 and only 56.3 per cent in 1950-51 (see Table -- 1) Thus the heavy reliance on indirect taxes is inequitable and a major source of inflationary pressure hurting the common men and poor.

TABLE 1 Proportion of Direct and Indirect Taxes in Total Tax Revenue of Central Government

All Direct Taxes	All Indirect Taxes
43.7	56.3
33.1	66.9
24.4	72.6
22.1	77.9
18.52	81.49
	43.7 33.1 24.4 22.1

If stability in direct tax is advocated, then there greater justification to maintain stability in indirect tax rates. If the rate of tax on income tax is reduced earlier for voluntary compliance and to avoid tax evasion, then there is no justification to raise the specific rates of excise duty by five per cent on a large number of items for additional revenue.

This method of raising tax rates of indirect taxes as well as a comparatively greater reliance on indirect taxes for additional revenue should be avoided to maintain an equitable tax structure.

In this budget, though the tax rate has been raised on automobiles, and electronic goods, the tax rate on corporate sector has not been raised. On the other hand, there is proposal to raise an additional revenue of Rs 50 crores by increasing the excise duty on aluminium ingots and wire rods and Rs 166 crores by enhancing the duty on pig iron and various steel items. These are bound to raise the prices of iron and steel, and aluminium which are used as basic inputs in various industries. Thus this will lead to an inflationary spiral through the cost-push impact.

III

THE rise in the prices of steel and pig iron will take place not only because of the increase in duty on pig iron and various steel items from Rs 135 to Rs 185 per tonne, but also due to the pre-budget hike by eight per cent in the administered prices of pig iron and steel produced by the integrated steel plant from the first week of January 1989. There was also another price revision of steel and pig iron one year before. In between these pre-budget hikes, prices were also raised consequent on upward revision of the railway freight, the Central excise classification changes and the introduction of a balancing pool formed for hot rolled items and pig

There was also a pre-budget hike in the weighted average price of coal sold by Coal India by 13.7 per cent over the existing prices, which will increase the burden of coal consuming industries by Rs 550 crores in 1989-90. For instance, this hike in coal price

1.62 per cent, of power by 10 paise per Kwh. cement and Railways by 1 per cent.

In a similar way, the Government will net additional revenue of Rs 67 crores due to the rise SUB the levy sugar price by 0.15 paise to Rs 5.25 per k and around Rs 54 crores out of the hike in the pri of milk and bread in New Delhi. If the Finan THE Minister takes credit by not increasing the speci Tree duty on so called items of mass consumption li Maul tea. coffee and others, then how is sugar a luxu the n item whose price has been raised before the budget! the at

Thus by backdoor methods, the Governme the fr collects a huge amount of additional revenue Igoes increasing the administered priices of various good memor particularly basic inputs like steel, pig iron, and cor of per These pre-budget hikes in administered prices Since steel, pig iron and coal, alongwith the 11 per ce the c across-the-board hike in freight, parcel and luggag note t rates proposed in the Railway Budget, and the nas pu in duty particularly on steel, coal, aluminium wil 1988, have a cost-push impact on the price level and le consid to an increase in prices of most articles of ma about consumption which will harm the poor most.

According to a Reserve Bank of India study, abo half of the rise in wholesale price index has be Indian occasioned by a rise in the administered prices. Ti things hike in the administered prices constituted as mu them as 29.8 per cent of the increase in the wholess of the prices between 1970-71 and 1983-84. Another stucthey l by developing a computable price formulation modithe ne based on 50 × 50 Seventh Plan input-outp matrix derived the general price level with respect incorp price changes in nine major price-administer envisa commodities. The model showed that the first rour the la impact of nine administered price increases accoun initiat ed for about 50 per cent of the general inflatio seen t during the period between 1970-71 and 1983-8 they h When the feedback effect via money wage rat places changes, etc are included, the total impact of the indica administered price hikes account for 61 per cent.

Thus it is obvious that the total cumulatinarrang impact of all administered price hikes just before facsing the 1989-90 budget would be even higher. Thagains inflationary pressure will be further strengthen main due to the proposed 11 per cent hike in the railw freight rate in freight, parcel and luggage to yie an additional revenue of Rs 876 crores.

The fuller consequences of administered pricought hikes, increase in the railway freight rate and rise ! the duty on basic inputs like steel, pig iron and co in the 1989-90 budget, will be felt over time as the resultant cost increases and price adjustments to sur public cost increases work themselves out feeding of another in a mutually reinforcing chain. The price The effects become more apparent once the cost-pus impact generated by the increase in the administer to with prices translate themselves into increase in the price help t of final consumer goods.

IV

IN spite of heavy reliance on indirect taxes even basic inputs, the overall deficit in 1989-90 budget (Continued on page)

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Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGangotri Azad, Nehru, Jinnah and India's Partition

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the pri Finan THE publication of the thirty pages, earlier withheld e specific from the published text of the memoirs of tion li Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, whose birth centenary a luxu the nation celebrated last year, has naturally turned oudget the attention to the circumstances attending upon vernme the freedom of the country with partition. Attention enue goes to the pre-independence days because the s good memoirs of Azad deals with the events and conduct and cor of personalities during the pre-independence days. prices Since so much of expectancy had been there about per ce the content of those thirty pages, it is necessary to luggag note that there is nothing new in these thirty pages, the n as published in the book brought out in November, ium w 1988, which was not known before, whether one and les considers the facts of history or the views of Azad of ma about events and personalities of the period preceding independence.

ly, abo Of course, the publishers, in keeping with the has be Indian practice of finding exultation in obfuscating ces. Things, have made it as difficult as was possible for as mu them for any one to understand what was the content wholess of those thirty unpublished pages which they claim er stuthey have published now. Any one going through on mod the new edition would realise this truth too well.

t-outp First, there is no indication in the book how the spect incorporation of the withheld material had been inister envisaged by the author or the editor of the book, st rout the late Professor Humayun Kabir, without whose account initiative the memoirs would perhaps have never inflatic seen the light of the day. The publishers say that 1983-8 they have incorporated the material in appropriate ge rat places within the text published originally in 1958, of the indicating the new material with an asterisk mark at abol the beginning and at the end of the new material incorporated. There would be no quarrel with this mulati arrangement, if the publishers had published the facsimile of the original thirty pages indicating against each para the number of the page in the main text where it has been incorporated. For reasons best known this consideration railw reasons best known this sensible arrangement has not to yie been followed, although the prolonged controversy attending upon the publication of these thirty pages d pricought to have suggested to the publishers the utter need to indicate the new material most prominently, nd co without leaving any scope for doubt about what has been included as new material in the new book. This to such is but one indication with what indifference the publishers in this country treat the readers and the he pricause of historical understanding.

The most strange aspect of the thirty pages, as nistere to withhold the to withhold the material. Some illustration would be price the reader to understand why this question becomes relevant. In the book, as published in 1958, thirty years ago, there are comments on events and personalities made by Azad, which are far more controversial than what is contained in many of the paragraphs that are indicated in the new edition of

the book as forming part of the material earlier withheld. In June 1945 the then Viceroy and Governor-General of India, Lord Wavell, at the instance of the British Government in London, invited the Indian political leaders to participate as members of his Executive Council (something like a Council of Ministers) as a prelude to forming the Government of free India, on the basis of talks to be held between the British Government and the Indian political leaders. The Muslim League (in reality only Mohammed Ali Jinnah) objected to the Congress nominating any Muslim as a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council even from the quota of members allocated to the Congress party under the arrangement agreed upon among all the parties to the discussion at the Simla Conference held at that time. The Congress insisted upon nominating any one it liked and finally nominated five persons, of whom only two were Hindus, on whose votes the Congress political power depended.

"The upshot was that the list submitted by the Congress contained only two Hindu names. ... It may be said that the Hindus who constituted the majority community of India would object to such a proposal but be it said to their credit that the Hindus of India stood solidly behind the Congress and did not waver even when they found that in the Congess list of five, three men represented the Muslims, the Christians and the Parsis. The Hindu Mahasabha tried to make political capital out of this decision of the Congress, but every one knows how miserably the Mahasabha failed. It is a strange irony of fate that like the Mahasabha, the Muslim League also opposed that the Congress should include a Muslim name in its list", writes Maulana Azad (p. 121). Azad issued a press statement as the Congress President to explain the Congress stand on the matter,

Now consider what we are now offered as a portion of the withheld text: "We were thrown into a new world and despite the difficulties the (Congress) Working Committee decided to participate in the Conference. We realised that vast changes had taken place in the international sphere and those changes had undoubtedly had repercussions on the Indian problem. The inevitable result of those changes was to bring to the forefront the question of Indian freedom and that of the freedom of other Asian countries." (p. 122) The question is, why in 1958, a decade after Indian independence, the author or the editor of the book should have thought it necessary to withhold the publication of this paragraph? There is no explanation provided in the book.

There are many such paragraphs stated to have been withheld from the book as published in 1958, It is baffling indeed why Azad should have thought it necessary to prevent the publication of these paragraphs which could not be considered to be controversial by any standard. The fact remains that the

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original edition published in 1958 contained many highly controversial assessment of a united India. sonalities so much so that the supplementary material now included in the complete book has brought no surprise to anyone who had read the 1958 edition. It remains thus an enigma why such paragraphs containing general observations of the most noncontroversial kind should have been withheld from

the original publication.

Azad has pinpointed the responsibility for the partition of India on two persons - Mohammed Ali Jinnah and Jawaharlal Nehru. The Indians are accustomed to looking upon Jinnah as the architect of the partition of India but not many have sought to examine to what extent Nehu could also be regarded to have contributed to the partition of India. The task of assessing Nehru's role in the partition of India is unavoidable. And it is not the opinion of any individual, even if it be that of a person of the stature of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, which is to be regarded as being conclusive in such an assessment. From this standpoint the recentlypublished biography of Jinnah written in Bengali by Sailesh Kumar Banerjee, a self-confessed Gandhian now occupying the exalted position of the Secretary of Gandhi Smarak Nidhi (he is also member of Khadi & Village Industries Commission appointed by the Government of India) deserves some attention. On the basis of a wealth of material derived from published sources in India, Pakistan and abroad, Banerjee has shown that until 1937 there was no idea among the leaders of the Muslim League, and certainly not in Jinnah, about asking for a separate state for the Muslims.

It was only after the sharp disappointment suffered by the Muslim League, in the wake of the Congress not acting up to its commitment to form a joint Ministry with the Muslim League in Uttar Pradesh after the election of 1937, that the League under Jinnah's leadership 'turned irrational and became rapidly anti-Hindu in its political stand. In 1937 the Congress was unable to secure even a single Muslim seat in Uttar Pradesh. It was only with the magnanimity of the Muslim League led by Jinnah that in a byelection Rafi Ahmed Kidwai Could enter the assembly as a Congress member. The Muslim League was so steadfast in its alliance with the Congress in 1937 that it spurned an offer from the British Governor to join a ministry formed without the Congress. The League not only refused to join the Ministry of the Governor but expelled a member who had chosen to join the Governor's Ministry. And yet the Congress saw nothing wrong in admitting an expelled Muslim League MLA within the Congress fold to increase the number of Muslim Congress MLAs in Uttar Pradesh to two. seem incredible but is, nevertheless, a fact of history of profound significance for the country.

And for this sad development the responsibility is ascribed to Nehru. Indeed, as documented in Banerjee's detailed study, the great bungling that the Congress committed in 1937 in forming Ministries in the provinces (States), for which the prime responsibility lies with Nehru, must be regarded as one of the most potent factors paving the path to the partition of India. The other was the statement of Nehru in June, 1946 that after the transfer of power the

League and the British Government on the transfer third action that made partition inevitable was the An decision of the Muslim League to stage the so-called "Direct Action" on August 16, 1946 against the Hindus which led to the Great Calcutta Killings.

Perhaps no other action by any one impaired the mutual trust between the Hindus and the Muslim in India as that single decision on direct action in which for the first time a State (Bengal) Govern ment administration (run by the Muslim League) was directly involved in aiding the rioters belonging to the y one community. The Chif Minister responsible for general the tragedy, H.S. Suhrawardy, instantly realised and 1 what had happened and sought to repair the damage But w but there was no time as Mountbatten had advanced the F the date of transfer of power from June 1948 to account August 15, 1947.

Maulana Azad has gone to the extent of laying the la the blame for the partition of India more on Nehru immer than even upon Jinnah. Banerjee certainly does not mothe go that extent in putting the responsibility on Nehru the rebut his assessment of the action of the political leaders brings out the fact that the assessment of the con-lives i duct of the leaders of the Congress, including Nehru, Parsis needs a thorough reappraisal in the light of facts. I the land

Kishor Samal: Inflationary Budget

(Contd. from page 12) Rs 7337 crores. Two-thirds of the budgetary expenditures take the form of financial transfer to other the spending entities by way of the budgetary expending the budgetary expension to the budgetary expension the budge spending entities by way of interest payment of to unc Rs 17,000 crores, subsidies of Rs 6841 crores on them food, fertiliser and export promotion and others, in instille the 1989-90 budget. Heavy deficits, are incurred learn, every year by the Central Government. The com-should bined deficit of both Centre and the States has been better increasing at a compound rate of about 35 per cent afford per annum over the last five years.

In contrast to the administered price hikes with parsis the cost-push character of price impact, deficit langua financing transmits its impact on price through the contin demand pull pressures. Deficit financing is our in vent equitous method of raising resources. Moreover, to tude to finance unproductive expenditure such as subsidies and in and interest payments, the deficit is incurred in the weal 1989-90 Central Budget which in turn, will create our pe

inflationary pressure.

THUS the large deficit with huge unproductive to the expenditure, the rise in indirect taxes or basic inputs, langua the pro-budget hikes in administered prices of key Who items and increase in railway freight will push up that th the general price level which will hurt the common ay in people most. So, the doles in anti-poverty measures no par given by the right hand will be robbed by the leftcourts hand through the instrument of cost-push inflation. The a

But the Government can avoid a huge deficit, when the periodic administered price hikes and rise in and all indirect taxes on basic inputs if it mobilises addi-folk w tional revenue by taxing agricultural income. But nodon sa one dares to attack the rural rich, who are regarded as the vote-bank, particularly in view of the coming

general election.

REFERENCE

Congress would be free to change the political 1. Jha, Shikha and Mundle, Sudipta, "Inflationary impliarrangement on the basis of Which agreement had increases", Economic and Political Weekly August 15, 1987, pp. 1394-1409.

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luslim My mother's contention is: "British gayan ne' apre vadhare British thai gayan" (We have become govern more British after the British have left). This, she ne) was attributes mostly to the fact that the Parsis, especially ing to the younger generation and the children of that ble for generation, speak no other language except English ealised and have no knowledge of any Indian language. amage But what is annoying and also rash, is the fact, that vanced the Parsis feel superior to the other Indians on 148 to account of their mastery of the English language and tend to look down on those who cannot speak laying the language well. Whereas, it would help them Nehru immensely if they continued to learn their adopted bes not mother tongue, Gujarati, as well as the language of Nehru the region in which they live.

Times today have changed greatly. Everyone ne con lives in very competitive times, and therefore, the Nehru Parsis are seriously at a disadvantage not knowing cts. The language of the region, nor their own mother tongue, Gnjarati. They try to get by with a smattering of Hindustani with the local people and of course with their knowledge of English with the expen-elite. But this kind of elitism must stop.

other The attitude and the thinking of the Parsis needs ent of to undergo a change as this change would benefit ores on them both locally and nationally. It should be ers, in instilled in the young that the more languages they curred learn, the more advantageous it is for them. They e com should also be made to realise that assimilation is been better than alienation and that they can no longer

er cent afford to live "marginal" lives.

In our family, we were first taught Gujrati at the s with Parsis School and we also learnt Urdu, the official deficit language of the erstwhile Hyderabad State. We gh the continued to learn Urdu, for instance, at the Conour in vent where we studied. By indebtedness and grativer, to tude to my parents is indeed great for their foresight bsidies and insistence that we also learn Gujarati. Otherwise, in the a wealth of knowledge concerning the history of create our people and of the lives of eminent Parsis would have been lost to us.

But, the Anglicisation of the Parsis has a longer and deeper history and cannot be confined merely uctive to the problem of our children speaking no other

nputs, language except English.

of key When they landed in India, the Parsis realised ish up that their hope of survival and of living in peace mmonlay in being strictly loyal to their rulers and taking asures no part in the tension and conflicts surrounding the e left courts of Princes or in the regions they inhabited. tion. The adaptibility of the Parsis was clearly manifest leficit, when they adopted Gujarati as their mother tongue ise in and also agreed to the condition that their women addi-folk would abandon their Persian mode of dress and But notion saris instead. Hence the Parsis, through good

> Dr. Chenoy belongs to the Department of English, Osmania University, Hyderabad.

sense, a sense of adaptibility and their display of loyalty managed not only to survive, but at the same time, were able to strictly preserve their identity and their religion. This same quality of adaptibility among the Parsis is observed by Mmle Menant in her book Les Parsis when she remarks: "Possessed of a wonderful assimilative power, they made light of Hindu customs, as, long before, they had sacrificed their Iranian habite at the pleasure of the Rana of Sanjan." But like all other writers she observes that "Mazdayasnans and Zoroastrians they remained. Their profession of faith has not changed." I may add here to what Mmle Menant observes: "Amen!"

Ever since the sixteenth century, Surat has been attracting the Parsis at an increasing rate being the most important seaport on the west coast of India, and at the same time, a trade centre for both the Moghul and European trading companies. By the seventeenth and 'eighteen' centuries, Surat became the largest Parsi settlement. The Europeans preferred the Parsis to act as their "brokers" because they had a knowledge of the languages and of the land they were living in. Not being hampered by taboos of caste and creed gave them enough flexibility to have

commerce with the foreigners.

According to D.F. Karake, the author of the History of the Parsis, "The Portuguese, French, Dutch and English factories all employed Parsees as their chief brokers".2 And as Eckehard Kulke says: "Close contact with the Europeans gave the Parsees the know how of European trade and business organisation and so laid the foundation for their subsequent economic and social rise under English rule".3 J.R.E. Jeejeebhoy in his "Introduction" to Parsee Lustre on Indian Soil mentions that "as years rolled on the Parsees made themselves indispensable to the English who ever since their arrival in India looked upon them for support and co-operation".4 This created a bond between the English or European races and the Parsis as communication between them was free and easy.

After the Portuguese relinquished Bombay to the British in 1661, Surat lost its importance after a few decades as a major trade centre, and Bombay attracted the Parsis from all settlements. The British encouraged the Parsi settlers and made over a piece of land on Malabar Hill in 1673 for the establishment of the first Dokhma. But the Parsis did not confine themselves to Bombay alone; they found positions in the princely States because of their familiarity with British administration, language and manners. The Parsis flowered and prospered under British rule. Writing in 1907, Khusrau Edalji Ghamat stated: "The prosperity of the Parsees dated from the advent of the British rule in India". 5 He was justified in making this statement, for the British rule gave India peace, legal security, modern

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bhoy at a meeting on the occasion of the coronation celebration in 1902:

The very circumstances of the country render such result inevitable. In all representative governments the majority must rule, and the natural consequence of such a system in a country like India would be that, however important the minority might be, it would never have any real share in the Government of the country ... The best course, therefore, for the Parsi community as well as all the other communities, who are in a hopeless minority, is that they must stand up for the British raj which distributes favours amongst all with strict impartiality.

The Parsis, therefore, identified themselves with the colonial power and this attitude was especially evident during the Mutiny of 1857 when they helped the British in fighting insurgency, in gaining lost territory, and gathering information of enemy movements. And the British knew how to channelise the energies and resources of the Parsis by recruiting them for white collar administrative tasks in the middle of the nineteenth century, such as assistant collectors, translators at courts, sub-assistant surgeons and postmasters. As Kulke states: "everywhere, where new professions were to be made accessible to Indians, Parsis appeared immediately in aboveaverage numbers."7

The British, also very cleverly raised the Parsi citizens to the rank of nobility which not only gave them prestige within their own community but also obligated them to the Crown. There were three Baronets: Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy, Sir Dinshaw Maneck Petit, and Sir Cowasji Jehangir. About 63 Parsis were knighted till 1946. How strongly the British bound the Parsis to them is evident in Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy's words on the occasion of his being knighted in 1843: "They, my children's children, shall be taught that fidelity to the British Crown is their first duty - loyalty their first virtue."8 It is small wonder then, that the Parsis adopted British or Western manners, habits, style of living and the English language. Temperamentally they were much more aligned to western thought and culture than to Indian ways and man-

A pertinent observation is made by the London Times of July 1905: "Whether from necessity or inclination, the Parsi of the 20th century is almost a foreigner to the great mass of the Indian popula-tion as was his predecessor of the eighth." The British regarded the Parsis as "elite" and, today, it sounds comic and even artificial when one recalls what Sir J.R. Carnac, the English Governor of Bombay said on August 11, 1877: "Then, gentlemen, Parsis, I would ask you to remember that you have what is called the very bluest blood in Asia."10

This feeling of alienation and superiority towards other Indians is clearly defined by A.S.N. Wadia in his Reflections on the Problems of India published in 1913:

It would be no exaggeration to say that to the Parsi the Englishman is less a foreigner than a Hindu or a Mohammedan in spite of the fact that he has lived among

education and at least to the Parsis, economic them for the last twelve hundred years. Speaking from prosperity. Therefore, the application of the Parsis that as a minority community they would become unimportant once India gained independence, become unimportant once India gained independence, in most places a stranger, and felt as if I were moving the propose of the prospect of the parsis that as a minority community they would become unimportant once India gained independence, in most places a stranger, and felt as if I were moving the prospect of t among alien people with whom I had nothing in comhan co "She

A decade earlier Sir John Strachey in his India The c Its Administration and progress makes the followinghe fine

The Parsis form a very small but highly respectable comphough munity, devoted for the most part to mercantile pursuits. Their enterprise as traders, and their freedom from preface... judice of caste, take them into all parts of India, but this now greater majority of them are to be found in Bombayne Par They have gained for themselves, by their character, their Euro superior education, and their wealth, a somewhat exceptional position, but they have so little in common will anything Indian, and their numbers so small, that the and can only be mentioned as an interesting group crystal foreigners, who for many centuries, have retained their by Fancient creed, and have kept apart from the people of a pr pian Indian countries.12

The British, of course, fanned such feelings and ntensive made the Parsis feel that they were elite and thi horou flattered certain sections of the community. In 1892 arsis General Dashwood described the "Parsis as foreignies."²² ners in India who would immediately be extirpated Writ if English would leave India". 13 But good sense prevailed among other Parsi groups and the news paper Rast Goftar took up the challenge and or August 7, 1892, replied: "We have time and again exposed the absurdity of regarding the Parsis as aliens in India."14 The Rast Goftar went on to say that though the Hindus and Muslims claim citizen ship by right of conquest, the Parsis "claim it bearsis a right of treaty, sacrifice and service; and so their must claim on India is more sacred, more certain and submore deserved than any other people".15

But apart from prudent warnings from time twishes time by more sober members of the community, thene pow anglicisation of the Parsis became more apparent of as time went on. Eckehard Kulke states: "In 1860ot before individual Parsis already stood up for a conscious But of anglicisation of the Parsi women. The main goal oble with the 'Parsee Society' was initially, a conscious copy of Eur ing of English manners."16 Framji Bomanji was of ineteer the opinion that "we want the English language ot toge English manners, and English behaviour for our way wives and daughters, and until these are supplied forms it is but just that the present gulf between the arsi so Englishmen and the Indian should remain as wided the e as ever".17

It is hilarious to read that in September 1880, an arsis to article entitled "How to Learn European Manners" unitie appeared in which a lady who called herself the se "Shereen" spoke on behalf of her Parsi sisters: "Hindu can speak from personal experience in regard to mind ed civilised Parsi sisters that there remains for uselpless much to learn. The rules of English society argnoran very nice, and to break those rules unwittingly of that er by inadvertence means the same as being illiterated or barbarous." She further adds: "According to unded European style, tea parties, music, reading, badmin ujarat ton, croquest parties, conversations, etc. should be as addintroduced among our people to begin with." A870s. century later, we find such opinions both superficialil spe and supercitious and smacks of artificiality and blind nguag nguag

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"Shereen" has a male counterpart who wrote: India The close union of the Europeans and Parsees is llowinghe finest thing that can happen to our race. It will mean the lifting up of a people who are lying low,

ole conthough possessing of all the qualities of a European pursuit flough possessing of an the quanties of a European rom preface... The complete Europeanisation of the Parsis but this now a mere matter of time."20 So assiduously did Bombayhe Parsis emback on the process of Anglicisation ter, theor Europeanisation that, writes Kulke: "The homes at except were furnished with English furniture, with pianos hat the and — according to their standard of living — with roup orystal chandeliers. Parsi girls or rich families, educated theed by English governesses, learned to play the violin le of ar piano. Evening parties have been celebrated since

then to the sounds of waltzes and operettas... The gs an ntensive use of the English language and the nd thithorough study of European literature led to the 1892 arsis writing and publishing poems and trage-foreiglies."21

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irpated Writing in 1916, Mmle Menant feels happy that:

The old ways have been heavily breached and European-life has penetrated further and further within the walls. We have lived side by side with the Parsis of the upper classes, we have taken short journeys in their company, and nothing, either in their company, and nothing, either in their dress or their manners, distinguishes them from the English around us.²²

citizen She is all for a conscious Europeanisation of the m it bearsis and continues her line of thought saying that their must seem repugnant to a Western educated man in anco submit to what she calls "a mass of obsolete

ractices" but that he does so in deference to the ime twishes of the elders but "at heart, he must long for y, thehe power to extricate himself from it (completely). parent nd one day or other he will do so (and that, too,

186 not before long)".23

ascious But of course, all this would not have been possigoal oble without an English education and to an exposure copy European manners. Around the middle of the was of neteenth century, a group of young Parsi reformers guage ot together at the Elphinstone College and decided or outh ways and means to bring about far reaching pplied forms in the community. As a result, independent n the arsi schools were founded and this society considers wided the education of young women to be especially

mportant. This reform in education showed the 80, an arsis to be decades ahead of other Indian comnners'nunities. Dr Reid who was the English chairman herself the society, in a scathing speech admonished the ers: "findu for not sending their daughters to schools o mynd educating them, but instead "sacrificing these for uselpless innocents...at the shrines of the demons of ty are norance and superstition".24 He called the Parsis ngly of that enterprising and progressive people". In 1863 iterate Alexandra Native Girls Education Institute was ing toounded by Maneckejee Cursetjee and though dmin ujarati was still taught in various schools, English ald be as added as a language of instruction after the single A870s. According to Kulke: "Even if Gujarati was erficiall spoken in most of the Parsi families, this I blindinguage ceased to be the cultural and educational anguage of the Parsis."25

of the knowledge of the English language. Accordto Mmle Delphine Menant, the author of Les Parsees, every third Parsi could read and write English in 1911.

Dadabhoy Naoroji, one of the leading reformers

of the community, recalled:

The six or seven years before I eventually came to England in 1855...were full of all sorts of reforms, social, education al, political, religious... Female education, free association of women with men at public, social and other gatherings, infant schools, the Students' Literary and Scientific Society, societies for the diffusion of useful knowledge in the vernacular, Parsce reform, abolition of child marriage, remarriage of widows among Hindus, and Parsi Religious Reform Society were some of the problems tackled, movements set on foot, and institutions inaugurated by a hand (sci.) of young men fresh from college...Such were the first fruits of the English education given at the Elphington College... stone College.26

Though the Parsis acknowledged the benefits that accrued from the learning of the English language, they "displayed a remarkable attachment towards Persian as a link to their traditional and historical past."27 In 1889 out of a total of 401 Parsis who were admitted to the matriculation examination, 537 chose Persian. The Parsis, despite their anglicisation were deeply rooted in their faith-the religion of Zerathushtra and would not permit that to be

In 1839, under the influence of Rev Dr John Wilson, an outstanding missionary and teacher, two Parsi boys were converted to Christianity. caused grave concern among the Parsis and their wrath was great. A storm of protest and indignation followed and they tried to win back the converts with threats of violence and immense money offers. The Panchayat field a suit before the High Court (in vain) and threatened the British government that "if Government would not help there would be a terrible uprising in the country, and the result would be disastrous."28 The pupils in Dr Wilson's school, most of whom were Parsis, sank overnight from 500 to 60 or 70. "This is the first and only time", says Kulke, "that the otherwise completely loyal Parsis expressed these kind of threats." But the converts did not return to the fold of Parsism. The Parsis had a rude shock and realised that they could not look for protection from the government in situations like these and therefore rallied round to foster a new independent community consciousness.

BUT it remained an established fact that only English education, the English mode of living and manners were regarded as an advance in civilisation. D. F. Karaka in his History of the Parsis published in 1884 mentions: "The Parsee mode of life may be described to be an electic ensemble, half-European and half-Hindu. As they advance every year in civilisation and enlightenment, they copy more closely English manners and modes of living.'30 He is here clearly establishing that advancement in civilisation is to be equated with English manners and modes of living. Elsewhere, Karaka again refers to what he feels are the benefits of English civilisation on the The Parsis were in the lead with their bax pansion our Rankisgri cone ann, indication of increasing intellectual

taste among the Parsees, it may be noted that of late English music has formed one of the amusements of their evening". 81 Karaka strongly believed in "the effect of English education upon the Parsis generally will be to raise them still in the higher scale of civilisation".32

Mmle Menant, a great admirer and champion of the Parsis, was strongly convinced that assimilation with the English way of life was most beneficial to

the Parsis and happily observes:

Once that the English occupation of India had drawn them away from the Hindu mode of life, which had been theirs for so many centuries, it was no longer wealth, and the importance attached to it, which they covered. Much rather, it was the inestimable advantages procured by education, brought within the reach of all, that they wished to benefit themselves by. From that moment their ambition was to realize the opportunity of this marvellous assimilation with the English, and it must be admitted that they have succeeded.³³

The Parsis continued to dominate every sphere of education and in this they were greatly encouraged by the British. Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy had his daughters educated in strictest secrecy so that this revolutionary idea of female education should not anger the orthodox elements in the community. But in 1842 (the same year as Sir Jamsetjee's daughters were being educated) a Parsi Meheribai Hormusjee Shroff, permitted her daughter to attend an English private school. Dosibai, the daughter of Meheribai, whose married name was Dosibai Cowasjee Jassawalla, in The Story of My Life mentions this incident and says that it "created a great scandal among the Parsis, some of whom went so far as to send threatening letters to the family... Some of the Parsees... had unanimously resolved to excommunicate Bai Meheribai and her house."34 The British at once championed cause of Meheribai and the Bombau Courier, an English newspaper, wrote on August 23, 1842: "We shall watch the progress of this girl with deep interest and will rejoice to find the noble example followed by others."35

It was still a sensation in the middle of the nineteenth century when women participated as equal partners in social functions. Reformers like Dadabhai Naoroji, Maneckji Cursetji and the Cama family permitted their wives and daughters to attend public functions like dinners and festivities when men were present. In 1859 when an attempt was made to admit women into the drawing-room and dining hall, the attempt was described as "dangerous".

Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy, though he had daughters educated in strictest secrecy, took the very bold and unorthodox step of bringing his wife and three daughters-in-law at a banquet he gave to celebrate the marriage of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. He also introduced the ladies of his household to the Governor and Lady Carnac and to Lord Kean—the hero of Kabul. This roused the ire of the orthodox section of the community, but we can sure that the British lauded this step as one of initiative and courage. The Bombay Times of March 11, 1840 reported that this "deserves to be noted as a large stride towards the European state of society", 36 Mmle Menant records in her book that "at

by throwing open his splendid salons to European where the honours were done by the ladies of hi family, and the Governor-General was often please to be received under such agreeable circumstances"

Dramatics was one other cultural activity that the Parsis took up enthusiastically. The Parsi Elphine tone Dramatic Society for the performance of play in English was formed in 1850. Fortunately, the Gujarati Theatre was founded about the sam time by various Parsi Gujarati theatre activists still in existence and continues to flourish eve today, albeit mostly in Bombay, and is a uniqu feature of Parsi life and humour. Members of the older generation among Parsis still recall hilarious productions - parodies of Shakespeare plays - in Gujarati. Kulke's contention that "th development of a modern vernacular theatre is ur imaginable today without the role of the Parsees" is absolutely correct.

Apart from cultural activities, the Parsis imit ted the Englishman's enthusiasm for sports. Cricket became a popular sport and Parsi teams were sent England to play against the British teams. In 188 a Parsi team was sent to England and the Presider of the team, in his speech clearly demonstrated the the team was going to England as if it were going of a pilgrimage, so great was their awe of the gam and their admiration of English cricketers no less:

I may say that the object of the team in going to Englar is a very modest one. Cricket, as you know, is the national game of England. It has taken root among the Parsi community, and as artists go to Italy to do homa to the great Masters, as pilgrims go to Jerusalem worship at a shrine, or as students in the middle Ag went to the chief seats of learning in places where Scien and Philosophy had made their home, so now Parsis a going to England to do homage to the English cricketer to learn something of that noble and manly pastime in I very country which is its chosen home. 30

So great was the Parsis' fame in cricket the President Roosevelt's first question to J.N. when the latter visited the United States was: "Hay the Parsees won the great annual cricket match! India this year?" Swimming, cycling, skating motorsports and flying were other sports enthusias cally taken up by the Parsis. Women participated the arena of sports as actively as the men and prove that their spirit for adventure was not dimmed hampered by their sex. Murzban in his translation of Les Parsees observes: "Nowadays it is not unusal sight to see a Parsi lady riding on horsebas on the Matheran Hill, or on bicycle, or driving h motor car in Bombay. For instance Miss Fran Dinshaw Petit, the richest Parsi heiress, who has give her fortune to the founding of the Parsee Gir Orphanage, is to be seen driving her motor car eve evening from her residence on the Malabar Hill the band-stand on the Esplanade, and many anoth Parsi lady for that matter."41

As advances were made in living, in education, culture and in sports, the Parsis of both sexes ma rapid strides in the innovations and alterations in traditional mode of dressing. According to M. Murzban, the translator of Mmle Menant's bo Les Parsees, "the changes have been very rapid a very varied" in the dress of the Parsi males. Calcutta, Mr Rastamji Kavasji set the same example of the same example of the farming point of view of utility,

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Europeanisation of men's clothes is advisable, but from an aesthetic point of view it has its disadvantages. In the Christmas number of the Times of India (Bombay) of 1915 there appeared an article entitled "India, one hundred years ago" which demonstrates how quickly the Parsis adopted the Western mode of dress and abandoned their traditional gear:

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Clothes do make a difference. The famous saying cannot be disputed, and most of us, in trying to visualism the past in India, probably forget to make allowances for the change in the clothing of Indians. The Europeanised Indian is of course quite modern; he may be wise but he is certainly less picturesque than his ancestors, and, in this respect, none has lapsed farther from grace than the Parsee of today."42

This proves that the Parsi males were among the first to change over to Western or European modes of dress.

On the subject of the dress of women, Murzban remarks: "To my mind, Parsis of the gentle sex have now reached a stage of innovations, in the matter of their dress, to go beyond which it will be inadvisable - for many reasons. Utility and economy must go hand in hand with aesthetics. Indiscriminate introduction of western fashions of dress means the disappearance of the beautiful oriental costumes of women."43 Mmle Menant has rightly observed that the Parsi women when "they appear at European receptions, where they are easily recognisable by their graceful garb, which they would, assuredly be ill-advised to discard in favour of our paltry fashions".44

The following is a description of the dress of a Parsi lady worn on a state occasion in England, which proves Mmle Menant and all other authors who have advocated that the sari is the most graceful dress, correct: Madame a journal of fashion published in London, in its number dated June 6, 1903 says: "Their Majesties' Court at Buckingham Palace ...Some of the gowns...Lady Jehangir Cowasji Jehangir...A beautiful Indian saree, of white transparent silk, embroidered most artistically in gold, the saree forming a sort of drapery round the head, resembling the old Gracian style of dress, with the jewels, making a perfect picture of Eastern spendour."45

From entertaining, socialising, innovation in dressing, we now turn our attention to women accompanying their men on their travels. In casting aside nslatio traditions and taboos which hampered and which were unprogressive, the Parsis were always encouraged by the British to make or take bold, innovative steps. The Parsi women rarely accompanied their husbands on their travels and hence caused great amazement when the same, hold, Rustamji Kavasji (Banaji), who allowed his wife and daughter to preside over social functions, now took them along with anoth him to Calcutta. Being a note of event, The Englishman, a newspaper of Calcutta wrote on August 14, 1838:

> This arrival must be regarded as an event in the history of Native Society. It presents the first instance, we believe, of a violation of the habits of seclusion to which the Parsi ladies, in common with those of Hindustan, have hitherto been subjected, and we trust that it may be regarded as the harbinger of a new system of treatment under which all that is bright and fair in this hemisphere may come to

are occupied by the happy and independent dames of the West, Mr Rustamji Cawasjee deserves, in our opinion, the applause and gratitude of, all well-wishers of the Cause of Civilisation in India.46

Innovation is to be lauded and stagnation to be decried, but one clearly sees here the white man's burden attitude of the British in trying to bring about reforms in what they thought was an uncivilised society, and the Parsis feeling gratified that they shared this burden or at least, lightened it for those who led with the torch of civilisation! What is left out is the fact that Indian culture and civilisation has survived far longer than the Western civilisation and that the endurance of a civilisation lay in the profundity and wisdom of its spiritual heritage.

But to continue our discourse: Les Parsees cites many examples and instances of men and women taking the plunge and travelling about with their families and in some instances, alone and independently. On May 3, 1858, Dr Burjorji Dorabji Cooper with his wife and daughter sailed by the Leopold on a voyage to England. The Parsee Prakash chronicles this as the first Parsee family going to England.

In 1868, Bai Bhikaiji, sister of K.R. Cama, and wife of Dorabji Pestonji Cama (a life-long resident of London), travelled the whole of Great Britain. In 1870, she travelled in America, Japan, and China, and wrote an account of her travels in Rast Goftar over a nom de plume. We return once more to Dosibai C. Jassawalla, the daughter of Mehribai Hormusjee Shroff, who had gained notoriety as being the first Parsi girl to attend an English Private school. This intrepid lady, was, in 1907 on a tour around the world at the age of 78. The Parsee of February 23, 1908 has this to report:

Mrs Dosibai C. Jassawalla, who is at present in London on her way back to India, finishing her tour round the world in her seventyeighth year, was one of the most picturesque among the much bejewelled Parsees in the House of Lords at the opening of Parliament ... says an English contemporary. This venerable lady was the first Parsi girl to receive an English education, and the first parsons any Indian ladies to be our in healish excitation. among any Indian ladies to be our in English society in India.17

The Parsis were also noted for their lavish hospitality and felt flattered and "honoured" when the English or Europeans attended their functions and festivities. Forbes in his Oriental Memoirs mentions the Parsis as being of a sociable turn and that they entertained their English friends at Surat and Bombay with great splendour and hospitality blending these with European taste and comfort. M.M. Murzban makes a mention of one Ardesir Dady who, at the commencement of the nineteenth century that is, in 1800 A.D. "made himself conspicuous by the splendid receptions he offered to Europeans". The tables were covered with recherche viands, rare and generous wines, music and dancing - all conspiring to provide his guests with the choicest entertainmet. In 1804, he gave a dinner at his place of residence, near Parel, to the Right Hon'ble Viscount Valentia. The elegance and splendour of the dinner has been described in the Bombay Courier.48 Lavish entertainment to and for Europeans was also given by Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy who was as hospitable as he was manificent. The Camas, the Dinshaw fill places in society as useful and important as those which Petits make up the list of gracious Parsi hosts who

entertained magnificently.

Hence, Anglicisation among the Parsis was in proportion to their economic prosperity and between 1880 and 1920 consumption habits were more westernised than either Indian or traditional. Delphine Menant notes that "In the houses of the higher classes, the furniture is elegant, the service conducted on the European style."49 However, certain Parsi critics warned against the dangers of such excess and commented on the Parsi woman being a mere "parody upon her English sister".50 N.S. Ginwalla in his essay on "A Peep Into Parsi Life" in 1880, lashes out at the pretentiousness of Parsi women trying to model themselves on English

These dressed up dolls of Parsi ladies pretend to be highly civilised and refined, and better socially morally and intellectually than everybody else, simply because they are able to speak, read and write just a little English, and have a glimmering idea of English society, life, dress and manners... Most of these girls when married and settled in life turn out extravagant, selfish and showy, and sometimes prove more a course (sic) than a blessing to themselves and others.51

Warnings were issued from time to time and speaking of the society woman it was elsewhere that "the Parsi women has a strong inclination towards westernising tendencies... and so, unless she draws herself up in good time, and makes a stand somewhere, she runs the risk of being drawn into the 'whirlpool' of ... the so-called smart society. She is not a society woman... but social functions have an irresistible attraction for her, and she allows herself, at times, to be drifted into an aimless existence, the prey of cnnui, who has nothing to do. No goal in life, no ambition, no ideal. Thus, without exactly being a votary of fashion, or the smart woman or society leader, she fails to fulfil her high destines adequately."2

At the other end of the pole, we have Mmle Menant giving us a picture of Parsi ladies who live in rural areas or in humbler sections of society and commends their dignity and grace of bearing:

Beside the great, elegant and literate lady who visits Government House and receives English society, and even visits Europe, let us not forget her humble sisters of the inferior classes... It is in village-life, above all, that the Parsi woman shows her superiority most markedly. Nothing is more affecting than the witnessing of her serene and dignified fulfilment of the duties entailed by her position in life, and her conscientious observation of the three great principles of her Faith, — 'Good Thoughts', 'Good Words', 'Good Deeds'. One, then, understands that if English education has been able to do something for intellectual culture, it had bed nothing to absence in the diese lectual culture, it had had nothing to change in the direction of morals.⁵³

This brings me back to the beginning wherein I had stated that we pride ourselves merely on our performance of the mastery of the English language, some Western customs and habits which we have picked up, a certain life-style, without realising and accepting the viability and importance of the language of the region we are living in, its culture and traditions, the habits of its people. Such a superficial habit benefits no one; on the contrary it makes us a laughing stock.

Thinking along such lines - that we are Parsis first and only secondly Indians, and by aligning ourselves with European culture, — brought about gurukli Wangri Hindus, and Muslims that Parsis are as much

crisis of identity. It is our great good fortune that a small segment of Parsis considered themselves to be Indians first and Parsis second, and by integrating into the Indian society and the emerging Indian nation as fully as possible gave the Parsis in post-In dependent India, a decisive support. Yet, at the time. this minority among the Parsis, was regarded as traitors to the British and to their own community as well. So thorough has our Anglicisation been!

THOUGH Dadabhai Naoroji had a very high estimation of British rule in India and though he felt that British rule should continue till it fulfilled, what he called, its "holy mission", he was not uncritical of the British exploitation of Indian economy and enterprise and spoke frankly on the drain of India's wealth and the huge profits accruing to the British as a result of this drain and exploitation. He wrote a book entitled Poverty and Un-British Rule in India wherein he developed the 'drain theory' and also spoke effectively in the British Parliament at various commission hearings. He also gave his attention to the 'Indianisation' of administrative services and agitated for the raising of age for entrance to the Indian Civil Service and its reform and Indianisation. Naoroji and Wacha vehemently agitated against the use of money of the Indian tax-payer to support British military expeditions outside of India.

Therefore, the Parsi attitude of aiding with the Ma British or keeping aloof from the national move-during ment was a matter of serious concern to Dadabhai zeal Naoroji and he emphasised: "Whether I am an Malab Hindu, a Mohammadan, a Parsi, a Christian, or of Mena any other creed, I am above all an Indian. Our country is India; our nationality is Indian."54 Again the Grand Old Man of India warns in a letter and expresses his distress "about the views some Parsees are taking that we should dissociate ourselves from the Hindus and Mohammedans. Nothing could be more suicidal. (Italics mine). We are India's and India is our mother country, and we can only sink or swim with and as, Indians. If we break with the Indians, our fate will be that of a crow in peacock's feathers. The English will in no time pluck out those feathers."55

In 1890 as President of the Indian National Cong upliftm ress, Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, in his presidential add human

ress defended his community and stated:

In speaking of myself as a native of this country, I am Sadan' not unaware that, incredible as it may seem, Parsis have been both called, and invited and allured to call them believes foreigners. If twelve centuries, however, entitled india, Angels and Saxons, and Normans and Danes, to call to the themselves natives of England, if a lesser period entitles the lot the Indian Mohammedans to call themselves natives of the Indian Mohammedans to call themselves natives of India, surely we are born children of the soil, in which been so our lot has been cast for over a period of thirteen centends thries and where turies, and where, ever since the advent of the British compare power, we have lived and worked, with our Hindu and Phiroze Mohammadan neighbours, for common aims, common he asse aspirations, and common interests. 58

The speech is, once again, a warning to the mem inssior bers of his community not to indulge in the suicidal tather policy of staying aloof and convincing the vast major

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social abuse among Hindus was Behram J. Malabari. He had the advantage of not belonging to any polical party, so much so, that the British, who were apprehensive about interfering in the socio-religious sphere of the Hindu society, eventually supported him and his reformist activities. Both the British press, and the society in England and in India helped Malabari and lauded openly supported him. The reformers in the Hindu society also sided with Malabari and lauded his sincere efforts and genuine concern over the abuses in the Hindu Society especially those directed against women.

The orthodox elements were, however, bitterly opposed to Malabari's reform movements and charged him with not possessing the Hindu's insight into Hindu socio-religious practices because he was only a Parsee'. To this charge, Malabari replied firmly and courageously and his reply rings with the deep conviction of a man working on humanitarian grounds filled with compassion for the helpless and the down trodden:

If my Hindu friends take this line of argument ... that I am 'only a Parsi', I will be forced to reply that I am as good a Hindu as any of them, that India is as much my country as theirs, and that if they do not give me a 'locus standi', in the case, I will take my stand on the higher ground of humanity. I have not taken up the work as a holiday pastime, and I am not going to be bullied out of it by the holiest of Brahmins. I respect their right of action and will continue to do so, but at the same time they must not question my right of eliciting discussion nor attempt in a sinister manner to stifle such discussions. 57

Malabari was greatly influenced by his mother move-during his early youth and hence his reformatory abhai zeal especially for the emancipation of women. m an Malabari's mother, Bhikibai, according to Mmle or of Menant's account:

> Possessed the energy of the women of her race, and in her brave heart, bore an ardent love for the suffering humanity, and evinced an unspeakable pity for their pains and sufferings. Often accompanied by her little Behram, clinging to the skirts of her sari, would she sally forth to One evening she found on her doorstep, an infant in a basket. Bhikibal gave it shelter, an act no Hindu woman would have thought of doing. The next day, it turned out that the foundling was a child of a street-sweeper, (a Mahar by caste) (the lowest in the scale of castes in India). Her Hindu (women) neighbours spared no pains to make her bitterly feel the consequences of the temerity of her zeal.58

Small wonder then that Malabari worked for the Cong upliftment of the most miserable members of the add human race. He refused a title from the British and continued to spread his work through the 'Seva is have Sadan' a charitable organisation founded along with them. Dayaram Gidumal and spread all over western entitled India, for giving medical aid, education and benefits to call to the Indian women especially those belonging to entitles the lower castes and classes. Malabari's work has which been so outstanding that it is unfortunate that he en cen tends to be overlooked and even forgotten when British compared to luminaries like Dadabhai Naoroji, Sir du and Phirozeshah Mehta and others. Kulke is right when he asserts that Malabari's "motivation was less the mem missionary impulse of a superior social order, but icidal ather a sense of responsibility for the weaker

tives of the soil of India as they are.

Sections of a society-which he-also as a Parsee —
One of the greatest crusaders it and by feromers Formatical thin self to be a part."559

However much the British were to grant a special status and privileges to the Parsis and however much they may have favoured them, there was a limit to which the Englishmen would allow the Parsi to go. In 1867, a Parsi petition for the admission into the 'Voluntary Corps' was rejected as this corps was reserved exclusively for the English and it could not be expected that the Englishmen could serve in the same unit as a 'native'. Hence the English, though they considered the Parsis to be superior to the other Indians, would never allow them to be on a par with them. Upto 1874 only Europeans were allowed to join the Volunteer Corps. But, protested D.F. Karaka, there were certainly no natives more eager than the Parsis to share in the defence of British interests.

However, since the publication of Karaka's work, the Parsis were allowed to enrol as volunteers, to the exclusion of the other Indian communities. Quetta, Karachi and Poona, the Parsis were admitted freely into the corps of the European volunteers and in June 1894, Dinaha Dosabhai Khambatta was enrolled as lieutenant in the 'Quetta Corps'. This must have been a signal victory for the Parsis who had been agitating to be admitted into the Volunteer

When it was remarked that the Parsis had a repugnance for military service, Karaka sprang to the defence of his community and stated that the Persians, in olden times, had distinguished themselves amongst all by their valour and courage. Today they abstained from taking part in military exercises and in defending the country because of the insufficiency of pay in the army. Native soldiers, whether Hindu or Muslim were paid at the rate of seven rupees a month, while a Parsi, even employed as a servant, could earn twice as much. Therefore, how could the Parsis maintain their higher standards of living while they were paid such low salaries? Besides, Karaka was pained at the Parsis being compared with the natives when the Parsis felt themselves to be morally and intellectually their superiors. Why were they not provided with commissions in the army like the Germans and other Europeans? He concluded his eloquent appeal by questioning: "For if a German or a European of another nationality can secure a commission in the British Army, why should not a Parsi, who is born subject of the Queen Empress?"60 Only then, he says, will the Parsis feel completely identified with the British nation.

The wisdom and farsighted policy of Dadabhai Naoroji finds expression in his comparison of the Parsis dressed up as crows in peacock's feathers. Therefore, the Parsis would have been in a No-Man's Land, with the refusal of the English to consider them as their own kind or as equals however willing to assimilate they were - and the Parsis' entrangement and refusal to identify themselves with other Indian races had it not been for the good sense, prudence and wisdom of our letters in making common cause with the issue of India's incopendence, for their sense of social reform in a secular manner, and of course, to the Parsi spirit of generosity

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towards all. The Congress-Parsi had a very trying be so regulated that those of superior understanding towards all. The Congress-Parsi had a very trying be so regulated that those of superior understanding the leading members of the committee the convenience of the committee that the convenience of the committee that those of superior understanding the leading members of the committee that those of superior understanding the leading members of the committee that those of superior understanding the leading members of the committee that those of superior understanding the leading members of the committee that those of superior understanding the leading members of the committee that those of superior understanding the leading members of the committee that those of higher merit have been superior understanding the leading members of the committee that the convenience of the conv nity to revise and rethink their attitudes and slavish Thus Sir Dinshaw subservience to the British. Edulji Wacha, though obligated to the Crown for his title, nevertheless, had the courage and the wisdom to see that throwing their lot with the Congress would mean eventual security for the Parsis.

In a letter to Sir Dadabhai Naoroji he expressed his disappointment over the negative attitude of the Parsis and the press: "Let him (Rast Goftar) cry in the Wilderness. And let the Parsees, I mean the unthinking portion, who follow its lead, become so many donkeys. They will rub their eyes perhaps, when it is too late .. I am thoroughly ashamed of my

community, notably its so called leaders."61

Men like K.N. Kabraji, Vicajee and the other titled leaders of the community, the aristocracy of wealth, through the press, urged the Parsi community to stay away from the banner of revolt. Any criticism of the British Raj held the germ of treason. It they did not remain neutral they would incur irreparable disadvantages. Papers like The Parsee and the Rast Goftar warned its readers not to get involved: "When the elephants fight, the forest suffers, and you (Parsis) have no business to be there. You have nothing to do in that battle62.

Sir Dinshaw Wacha's indignation was great when he realised that the annual Congress meeting of 1889 threatened to become a failure due to the opposition of the conversative Parsis, and wrote to Dadabhai Naoroji: We must take a new departure and cut ourselves drift from the illiterate and unsympathetic aristocracy of wealth. Our sheet-anchor should now be the aristocracy of intellect."63 The conservative Parsis, in turn, pointed out that their traditional political abstinence was that permitted their com-

munity to survive for twelve hundred years. The Parsis greatest fear lay in the fact that being numerically weak, they, as a community, would hardly have a chance to survive in independent India, which to them, would always mean a Hindu India. Thus the battle between the Congress Parsis and the conservative Parsis continued with unabated vigour. Fortunately for us, we had men of vision and sound common sense like Prof. P.A. Wadia, who despite Sir Cowasjee Jehangir's plea to the viceroy on the eve of independence in 1945, in a telegram for a separate representation for Parsis, was quickly neutralised when Professor Wadia sent in turn a telegram rejecting any special privileges for the Parsis.

The elitist concept of the Parsis and their remoteness from the democratic principle of equality is demonstrated in the following lines by S.J. Bulsara which appeared in the Iran League Quarterly in

Human society is constituted of individuals of varying talent and capacity, and some among these have shown commanding powers which have brought millions under their sway. An individual brain has often outshone and outruled millions of others. One individual's unique talent may help and serve his nation in a way no other individual can. Where is then the meaning in claiming that all men are equal and have therefore equal rights?...Any sensible man can see the absurdity and futility of the claim for the equality of all men, Voting in human affairs should be so regulated that those of superior understanding

Round about 1930, the "Young Men's Parsi Association" became a vehicle for the younger generation of Congress Parsis. In their Journal they warned:

Our community's destiny is bound with India. India is as much our own as of others. It would be a misfortune if the community does not organise itself, to find its proper place in the national movement of the Day and devote itself, efficiently in guiding, directing and advancing the Indian political activities and forces of India with its traditional munit statesmanship, enterprise, intelligence and balance of mind, and zeal...For years the Parsee has taken a back seal in everything, because of a rather contemptible attitude import of our elders. It is time for us now to take over the reign nuclea in our own hands, quite capable hands...It is up to us, the talent younger generation now to undertake the task of educating this gi

We may say that these young men proved right any fie in the long run. Those who partially feared and rightly those who actively worked for the day of Indian independence, dawned. In all fairness the Indian National Congress laid no obstacles in the path of munity The of thos Parsis who are willing to reorient themselves. Parsis could also claim that members of their munity community like Dadabhai Naoroji, Phirozeshal superio Mehta and Dinshaw Wacha were true nationa tion, lists — though they had been forgotten for decades new ar Good sense, prudence, and foresight prevailed when young a "Parsee Nationalist Conference" was held on religio August 7, 1947, a few days before independence in follower the presence of B.G. Kher, Chief Minister of the the pre-Bombay Province. The main speakers at the conthough ference were the liberals, Sir Cowasjee Jehangir in the A.D. Shroff, and Sir Homi Mody. A.D. Shrofmade a call:

Our place in the India of tomorrow should be secured or karank the ground of merit and talent. Numerically we arto the too insignificant to merit any attention. Instead of needed claiming all sorts of concessions as a minority, we should needed the identity identifies a meritant with the state of the concession and the concession are the concession and the concession and the concession and the concession and the concession are the concession and the concession and the concession are the concession are the concession and the concession are the concession and the concession are the concession ar completely identify ourselves with Indians, and makthat wlourselves indispensable to the country. 66 people

Three days later, the Parsis manifested theuthe Pr reorientation by a public meeting to celebrate thereceptic attainment of India's independence. It began withpeople a procession to the statues of Dadabhai Naoroji welcom Phirozeshah Mehta and Dinshaw Wacha led by the mayor of Bombay who happened to be a Pars himself - Ardeshir P. Sabavala. They demons trated their positive attitude toward the New India by holding a public meeting at Albless Baug. Si Shapurji Billimoria, President of the Parsi Pun-chayat, stressed: "The Congress has given the Parsee community assurances that it will not intergraciou fere with its religious observances, customs and ontinu manners. The community has no reason to dispeople believe the Congress. As for ourselves we wilwell. continue to give our best to the country and the government."87 The shrewd Kulke rightly con tends: "Thus at the right moment, the Parsec 1. Delr displayed their traditional political adaptability urzban under all circumstances—loyality to the respective 2. D.F. ruler, in this case to the new political system."

But all Parsis were not capable of the same kin 3. Ecke of reorientation is evident in a book by M. Direct of Darookhanavala, The Indian Politeia published 4 H.D. 1949. It is a bitter attack on Hindu India, the sombay:

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rit have Congress movement and Maha Pinitize Clay Ang Sarqui Epundation Changai and Gangotri, p. 134. Parsi were many others, who though not as vociferous as Dunger Darookhanavala, and who did not make their voices they public, felt the same as he did. Thus "the process of Westernization, which began among the Parsees or Westernization, which began among the much earlier than among other sections of the proper Indian society, was not affected by the withdrawal of the Brirish; a counter-pole in the form of an Indianisation cannot be foreseen". 69 The comditional munity continues to provide India with one of the largest industrial concerns, banks (now nationalised), attitud, important politicians, journalists, military officers, e reign nuclear physicists, and men of outsanding legal us, the talent as well as in the administrative services and ducating this gives the community of being at the top in right any field which the Parsis choose to elect. Kulke rightly concludes: "The elite consciousness has thus been preserved upto the present in order to Indian make them forget the actual danger to the com-

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Indian munity's future." We should strive We should strive to emulate the illustrious example The of those who have gone before us and lead the comtheir munity, not into troubled waters by our feelings of superiority and elitism which in turn lead to alienaationa tion, but instead to "pastures new" envisioning a cades new and glorious future for the Parsis and for our when young, and prove that world religions, especially ld on religions like the religion of Zarathustra and his ence in followers who have for thousands of years followed of the the precept of Manashni, Gavashni, Kunashni - good con thoughts, good words, good deeds, do not die, but nangir in the words of George Herbert, the Anglican poet Shrof - "like season'd timber, always live". Let us also not forget that Khari salaam to Hinduoney che, ired orkaranke tey loge hamone asro apyo (real salaam goes we arto the Hindus for they give us refuge when we tead oneeded it most). My father always reminded us of should be the tended to be overly critical of the eople of India. And let us in all gratitude remember theithe Prince, the Raja of Sanjan, and his kindly te threception to the hand of weary, wandering, homeless

aoroji welcomed them: - said the Prince - welcome to those who Welcome, walk faithfully in the way of Hormuzd. May their race prosper and increase. May their prayers obtain the remission of their sins, and may the sun smile on them. May be a liberality and her gifts contribute to their Lakshmi, by her liberality and her gifts contribute to their wealth and to the fulfilling of their desires; and forever, may their rare merits of race and intellect continue to dis-Pun tinguish them in our midst.71

wittpeople when they landed on his shores, and he

n the Let us continue to prove the promise made to that intergracious Prince 1300 years ago that we, Parsis, will ansontinue to distinguish ourselves in the midst of the o dispeople of India and that their home is ours as e wilwell.

FOOTNOTES

Parsee 1. Delphine Menant, Les Parsis, vol. II, Translated M.M. ability urzban (Madras; Modern Printing Works, 1917), p. 9.

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- 8. Ibid., p. 139.
- 9. Les Parsis, pp. 199-200 note.
- 10. The Parsees in India, p. 139, note.
- 11. Ibid., p. 139 note.
- 12. Less Parsis, vol. I, pp. 199-200 note.
- 13. The Parsees in India, p. 139 note.
- 14. Ibid., p. 139 note.
- 15. Ibid., p. 140 note.
- 16. Ibid., p. 105.
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- 50. The Parsees in India, p. 108. 51. Ibid., p. 108.
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- 65. Ibid., p. 199 note. 66. Ibid., p. 263. 67. Ibid., p. 264.

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मध्य प्रदेश में हरिजन आदिवासियों के लिए नये कार्यक्रम

- अपित्वासी ग्रंचलों में स्थानीय पहल को प्रोत्साहन देने के उद्देश्य से आदिवासी उपयोजना और हरिजन विशेषांक योजना के तहत चलाई जा रही विकास गतिविधियों को जिला सेक्टर और प्रदेश सेक्टर की योजनाओं के रूप में विभाजित करने का निर्एाय।
- आदिवासियों और हरिजनों के विकास में समन्वय और निगरानी के लिए इस समय संभागीय स्तर पर पांच आदिवासी विकास प्राधिकरण और पांच हरिजन विकास प्राधिकरण हैं। इन प्राधिकरणों का पुनर्गठन कर संभागीय स्तर पर दस आदिमजाति और अनुसूचित जाति व विकास प्राधिकरण का गठन किया जा रहा है।
- ★ आदिवासी ग्रंचलों में वर्ष 1989-90 में एक सौ पचास माध्यमिक और बीस उच्चतर माध्यमिक एवं दस घन दो शालाएं खोली जाएंगी. इसके साथ ही 49 आश्रम, 35 प्री मैट्रिक छात्रावास और पांच पोस्ट मैट्रिक छात्रावास खोले जाएंगे। 99 प्राथमिक शालाओं को आश्रम शालाओं में बदला जाएंगा। पिछड़ी जनजातियों के परम्परागत कौशल में सुधार और उन्हें नये कौशल सिखाने के लिए 15 तकनीकी प्रशिक्षण केन्द्र स्थापित करने का निर्णय।
- आदिवासी और हरिजन विद्यार्थियों को इलैंबट्रानिकी कौशल का प्रशिक्षण देकर उन्हें स्वरोजगार के लिए तैयार करने के उद्देश्य से भोपाल, इन्दौर, जबलपुर और रायपुर में इलेक्ट्रानिकी प्रशिक्षण संस्थान खोलने का निर्णय ।
- ▼ गरीबी की रेखा से नीचे जीवन यापन करने वाले बीस हजार हरिजन आदिवासी परिवारों को गरीबी की
 रेखा से ऊपर उठाने के लिए आधिक मदद दी जाएगी. नेहरू शताब्दी वर्ष में जिन हरिजन आदिवासी
 परिवारों का जमीन पर कब्जा दिलाया जाएगा उन्हें खेती-किसानी शुरू करने के लिए अनुदान दिया
 जाएगा।

कमजोर वर्गों की भलाई के लिए संकल्पित मध्य प्रदेश सरकार

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CULTURE

Jamini Roy: A Ceaseless Search

AJIT KUMAR DUTTA

I have had the opportunity to come across references to and see some of the works of Jamini Roy — both in reproduction and original — a long time ago, but I was actually introduced to him at a much later stage, some three decades back. It was a function to felicitate him at his residence in view of his failing health. He was around seventy, with age and signs of physical strain written large on his face. But when talking, he gave ample proof of his mental alertness. His memory too appeared sharp. What began as a sort of exchange of pleasantries, continued somewhat intimately for years to come, interspersed with correspondence at regular intervals and combined with visits from my side as and when I was able to do so. In fact the friendly and intimate tone of his letters encouraged me to call on him without much formality and prior appointment.

To me, with his easy manners and hypnotic charm, he was a symbol of a fast vanishing tribe holding on to certain ideals and a set of values. Art to him was more than a profession. Even at that age I found him sitting regularly at work. In a corner of his garden when he sat with colours, brushes and other parapharnelia around he appeared to be a sage engaged in deep meditation and, one may add, in search of his avowed objective. But he became a transformed personality when chatting, with people. From a jovial mood charactrised by witty comments he could easily transform himself to become quite serious and pointed in his references in course of conversations. I remember how once to stress his point about going on with a firm conviction, he started reciting extensively from well-known Dasu Roy's Panchali in Bengali, extolling the salvation in one's faith and surrounding, rather than seeking it in unknown and extraneous sources. All these brought out a man of deep conviction and memory.

He did not just preach an idea. But for sure, he practised what he believed, as brought out by his artistic achievements. His childhood memory of a Bankura village, full of colour and variety was quite striking. He had liberal and understanding father, whose support helped him to undergo necessary training to end up as a fullfledged artist. His one-time connection with the theatre world further helped him to understand the close relation-

The author is a regular commentator on art and culture. This piece is based on a paper he presented at a seminar held in January 1989 to commemorate Jamini Roy's birth centenary.

ship between illusion and reality. If he pointed portraits or landscapes to cater to particular types of demands, he wanted primarily to get some foothold, which indeed ensured his survival in a world of keen competition.

But neither his academic training nor a set pattern for survival gave him real satisfaction. In spite of continuing in a certain way, he was all the same keen on carving out a path for himself. His search in a sense was never ending. For a while he worked along the revivalist lines of the Bengal School. But soon he felt dissatisfied and gave up the attempt and thought of evolving something in his own way.

The problem which Jamini Roy faced was scarcely anything unique. Every artist worth the name has, at one stage or other, the need for self-criticism and the desire to chart on independent course. Of course many get baffled and get lost in the process.

Here we must take into consideration two factors which particularly weigned with our artist. With some sense of certainty it can be said that the national spirit of the times in which he worked did contribute towards a change in the artist's thoughts. Although this spirit could also be found in the Bengal School painters, some differences were however, noticeable. Abanindranath Tagore, for example, in the ultimate analysis, appeared to have relied on the Western sources for colour, and even drew inspiration from the Far Eastern sources in terms of wash technique, which surely was not the case with Jamini Roy.

In the second place, the vital and still living folk tradition, known quite intimately to Jamini Roy ever since his childhood, ever attracted the artist, and he intuitively turned to it, while searching intensely and trying to evolve an idom of his own. Jamini Roy not only solved his personal problem, but also succeeded in discovering a new direction for art.

It was doubtless a moment of decision for the artist, when at the age of 34 and well-settled in profession, he made up his mind to stop working in the European manner and to switch over. Even when he ultimately arrived, so to say, his search hardly ceased. Once he was sure of his path it was only a question of moving ahead. From the Kalighat types, noted for the bold sweeping lines as well some signs of urban root and sophistication, he moved closer to the pats of rural Bengal. In other words, there began on his part an attempt to further simplify his works. While motifs from alpana and kantha to an extent came to be integrated into the works, many non-

were found gradually disappearing, resulting in an overall simplicity. Perhaps achieving a sort of universal character seemed to be his ultimate purpose that according to some critics gave the works a quality of timelessness. Also he appeared to be keen on giving up literary contents in the pictures.

The new phase marked changes in techniques too as could be assumed. Instead of canvas and oil, lime-coated cloth or paper and tamarind seed glue or egg tempera received more attention. Colours came from indigenous, materials like hingul, harital,

kak khori, girimati and so on and so forth.

Theme-wise too, a change was quite obvious. Mythological characters - Krishna, Gopinis, Rama, Siva - appeared alongwith cats, cows, horses on one hand, and traditional dolls and toys, mother and child and the like as subjects on the other. But the artist turned around to the village folk as well and the Santals, the Mallas, the Kirtanias or musician groups came to occupy his fancy as subject matters. it may be further added that though not as such

essentials in terms, of forms, colours and remais our choice was widened when he became working a remais or choice was widened when he became working and choice was widened when he became working and choice was widened when he became working and choice was widened when he became working the artist's choice was widened when he began working on the theme of Christ in an interesting way.

> In Jamini Roy hence, almost in every respect, one could notice a change, rather an orientation, no doubt, out and out folk-inspired. He not only pointed to a posibility or suggested a direction, but proved a source of inspiration, which directly as well indirectly led many to more artistic explorations in style and expressions. Taking his cue if some set of artists turned to tribal art, others went for philosophical tenets and tried out the language of symbols, labelled otherwise as neo-tantric expressions.

> For emphasising on the folk sensibility, Jamini Roy received, in his lifetime acclaim from scholars and laymen alike. Gandhiji was among his admirers. Long after he is dead and gone, he or his endeavours continue to be as much relevant in the contemporary scenario. A distinct force or a sort of milestone, Jamini Roy doubtless epitomised a search for identity in the development of modern Indian art.

Carelessness of Population Census, 1981

ARUP MITRA

RESEARCHERS in various Social disciplines science across inumerable problems concerning data which are extensively discussed in their research papers. In the face of inadequacy of information and conceptual difficulties involved in the surveys, one begs that compilation errors must be reduced to minimum. However, the errors at times are much more serious than what can be easily identified as printing mistakes.

The Census of India, 1981 in its volume-India, Series-1, Part-III-B (ii), Table B-16 (Industrial Classification of Main Workers Non-Household Industry, Trade, Business, Profession or Services by Class of Worker and Sex) - commits such a gross mistake that it is not only serious but difficult to be reconciled keeping in view its extensive use in various fields not to talk about the responsibilities of the authorities and the national prestige. This table (B-16) splits the main workers in each industry division (and major group, too) into the following four classes: 'Employer' 'Employee', 'Single Worker' and 'Family Worker'. The figures are reported for the State as a whole and the urban sector of the State separately. Of the fourteen major States for which I was calculating the growth rates of the workers in different industry divisions over the decade 1971-81, I found to my surprise that in the States of Bihar, Gujarat and Maharashtra (State as a whole, not ruralurban separately), the workers in industry division 5 onward show either a negative growth rate or a modest increase.

Since it was quite unbelievable had to check the numberings. But that was alright. Later, industry division 5 onward, one discovers that the figures corresponding to the State and urban areas have been interchanged. Well, the industry division 5 does not start from a new page; corresponding to industry division 4 which constitutes the upper half of the page; the figures are reported correctly. In such a situation where entry in half of the page is correctly done, the researcher is not at all likely to be suspicious of the figures reported for the rest of the industry divisions. Therefore, possibly one would notice a major decline or a modest increase in work force in the industry divisions 5

to 9 over the decade 1971-81 in Bihar, Gujarat and Maharashtra or alternatively a massive increase in work-force in these industry divisions in the urban sector of the States. Indeed it would have

been a major blunder.

If the figures for the State as a whole and the urban sector are reported in the same page and a similar mistake is made, it can be easily identified. When such detailed figures at the two digit level are reported separately in different pages, is one expecting too high in drawing authorities more careful attention to the the informaof presentation tion?

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Forster and India

K. NATWAR SINGH

As I write this essay affectionate recollections of E.M. Forster come rushing to my mind. I do not wish to drive them away, even though they might make a dispassionate appraisal difficult. Just as he found it impossible to resist India, his friends find it impossible to resist him. I have had the good fortune of calling Forster a friend for fifteen years; it is largely to him that I owe such awakening as has befallen me. I have said elsewhere that a part of myself, such as I am today, has been moulded and permanently influenced by him. I do not know if that would do him any credit, but without him my life would have been infinitely poorer. His writings and his personal example have made some of his readers aware, if not capable, of higher things. He cured us of some of our baser ambitions, and instincts: if, to adapt a familiar saying, we can't beat them we don't want to join them either. The result is that his "aristocracy of the sensitive, the considerate and the plucky" (TC, 82) gets short shrift in the rough and tumble of everyday life. Yet it never gives up, never gives in. Its members are to be found in three generations of Indians who have had the pleasure of calling Morgan Forster a friend.

This emotional intimacy and rapport, spreading over most of the twentieth century, with a people so different from his own has been achieved through affection, loyalty, a warm heart, and sensitive understanding. He has spoken with a voice unlike anybody else's. The Indore preacher conveys much of our love for Forster when he tells him during the Gokul Ashtami Festival: "We have not met an

Englishman like you previously." (HD, 111)

A meeting of minds may not have always been achieved, but the hearts did meet. The radiance of his triple vision — as friend, critic, creative artist — has helped a few of us in "the building of the rainbow bridge that should connect the prose in us with the passion" so that we might "connect without Ditterness until all men are brothers" (HE, 196, 284). That is the essence of A Passage to India, the reason why it endures. It is still read, not because it found answers "to the tragic problem of India's political that without love you cannot "connect". The "unto "connect": their work and labours ended in Panic and emptiness".

In contemporary India Forster is not widely known, and judgement has been passed on him almost wholly on the basis of A Passage to India. lar in the 1950s; in a letter to me in 1954 Forster

K. Natwar Singh was awarded on March 28, 1989, the E.M. Forster Literary Award instituted by Arnold Publishers. Mainstream reproduces here a contribution by Natwar Singh to the collection presented to Forster on his ninetieth birthday (January 1, 1969), brought out as a book Aspects of E.M. Forster by the publisher, Edward Arnold. —Editor

wrote: "Yes, I am afraid the book will be as uncongenial to the new India as A Passage was to the old Anglo-India. The outlook of both the books is much the same. I think it is the political situation that has altered." The later book was misunderstood as an apology for the Princely Order. No one remembered as that long ago as 1922, in his remarkable essay, "The Mind of the Indian Native State", Forster had said: "An alliance between the British and the Princes against the rest of India could only lead to universal disaster, yet there are people on both sides who are foolish enough to want it." (AH, 378)

But there is a hard core of admirers who are aware of the deep and powerful influence he had on the moral outlook of his age, and to them he came

as a blessed relief after Kipling.

Having mentioned Kipling's name, I must pause and say something about him in relation to Forster. For the first quarter of the twentieth century the English-speaking world, perhaps including Forster, looked at India largely through the eyes of Rudyard Kipling. In his tribute to Ross Masood, Forster says — "Until I met him, India was a vague jumble of rajas, sahibs, babus and elephants, and I was not interested in such a jumble: who could be?" (TC, 29) Well, a great many Englishmen were, for that is precisely the India which Kipling very nearly succeeded in immortalising. All that tosh about the white man's burden and the stiff upper lip which made the sahibs at Poona and Cheltenham feel so pukka only widened the gulf between India and Britain. Forster, to some extent, provided the corrective. but the damage had been done.

Sensitive Indians found Kipling's jingoism offensive and offending, and many would agree with Orwell's comment that he was "morally insensitive and aesthetically disgusting". Orwell's correction of "white man's burden" to "black man's burden" is also very much to the point; for, unlike Forster, Kipling had no understanding of the economics of imperialism or for that matter any kind of economics. It was beyond him to realise or learn that British Raj, like all other empires, was an exploitation machine. He would have been completely baffled by Martin Luther King's comment that "the peculiar genius of imperialism was found in its capacity to delude so much of the world into the belief that it was civilising primitive cultures even though it was grossly exploiting them".

Forster and his like would neither build nor sustain empires; they have not the dedicated zeal, nor the self-righteous, public-school sense of responsibility upon which empires rest, as do the free Indian writers to present a book of tribute

Forster has been to India three times. His first visit was in 1912-13, in the company of Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson and R. C. Trevelyan. It was during this trip that he met, through Sir Malcolm Darlinga non-establishment Civil Servant and an exception to the generally unattractive set of men who ruled India — the Maharaja of Dewas Senior, Bapu Sahib, who "was certainly a genius and possibly a saint" (HD, 49). During this visit Forster travelled fairly extensively and made many friends. In spite of the bomb-throwing incident at Delhi, in which the Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, was slightly injured (HD, 18-19), the India of 1912 was politically very dull and inactive; and the Indian National Congress, in the words of Jawaharlal Nehru - who had just returned to India after seven years at Harrow, Cambridge, and London - "was very much an Englishknowing upper-class affair where morning coats and well-pressed trousers were greatly in evidence. Essentially it was a social gathering with no political excitement or tension." Gandhi was still in South Africa and relatively unknown.

The second visit was from April to November 1921. He spent most of his time at Dewas, where he was private secretary to the Maharaja. It was during this trip that Forster saw "so much of the side of life that is hidden from most English people"

(HD, 25).

Forster's last visit to India was in 1945, when he came to attend the Indian PEN Conference. His two great friends, Masood and Bapu Sahib, had died in 1937. He travelled to Delhi, Calcutta, Bombay and Hyderabad. Finally, he visited Santiniketan, "the home and the creation of Tagore... I spent a night there, and understood why it has exercised a mystic influence on many of its sons. You will either know a great deal about Santiniketan or else you will never have heard of it. It is that kind of place. Its name means 'The Home of Peace'." (TC, 334) Tagore, of course, was dead and so was Iqbal and "their disappearance has improverished the scene." (p. 333) Forster had met them both and has written about them in Abinger Harvest and Two Cheers for Democracy. Of this last visit he says:

The big change I noticed was the increased interest in politics. You cannot understand the modern Indians unless you realise that politics occupy them passionately and constantly, that artistic problems, and even social problems yes and even economic problems - are subsidiary.
 Their attitude is "first we must find the correct political solution, and then we can deal with other matters. think the attitude is unsound, and used to say so; still, there it is, and they hold it much more vehemently than they did a quarter of a century ago. When I spoke about the necessity of form in literature and the importance of the individual vision, their attention wandered, although they listened politely. Literature, in their view, should expound or inspire a political creed. (TC, 327-8)

In pre-1947 India "Art for Art's Sake" was not a

popular creed, and understandably so. First the battle for independence had to be won, then the pro-

blems of literature could be attended to.
"And did I do any good?" Forster asks himself. "Yes, I did. I wanted to be with Indians, and was, and that is a very little step in the right direction." (p 335)

Forster is perhaps the only Englishman, certainly

Indian writers to present a book of tributes to him.

In March 1963 Santha Rama Rau and Raja Rao were in my apartment in Manhattan. Santha's dramatisation of A Passage to India was still being talked about. Raja Rao's second novel in twentyfive years, The Serpent and the Rope, had received attention in serious literary circles in America, Forster's name naturally came up. Raja Rao said I should postpone my "study" of Forster and edit instead an Indian tribute to him as an offering on his eighty-fifth birthday. He added that nobody had done more for his writing than Forster. Both his first novel Kanthapura and The Serpent and the Rope were published with Forster's help, and became successes in their own right. So a decision was taken to get on with the project. Forster gave his affectionate blessing and by permitting inclusion of selections from his Indian writings - among them his virtually unknown but deeply moving and perceptive tribute to Gandhi⁵ — made publication possible.

The book, when it appeared, attracted attention in unexpected quarters. American admirers of Forster and critics responded warmly and it provided them an occasion to join in the Tribute. It also provided an opportunity for a reappraisal of Forster's work, its relevance and importance to present-day problems. The Wall Street Journal, as befits a sound financial

paper, posed the most pertinent question:

Few men of the West, none of them statesman, or in what C.P. Snow calls the corridors of power, can have had a much praise and of such kind from the East.... What was this accomplishment that won such feelings for an Englishman writing as a novelist about India; a circums tance that could have, and often has, engendered hostility

The accomplishment is indeed of a very high order, possibly unique. On the one hand it has been reso lutely private and on the other it has had wider, even universal, overtones. India has been a major but by no means an exclusive influence on Forster even though he calls his stay in Dewas "the great opportunity of my life" (HD, 10).

A Passage to India describes the "human predica ment". It also describes an India that has altered very considerably since 1924, but despite subsequent works on India by Westerners, it remains the out standing example of an Englishman's honest effor to understand and interpret this country and its

complex people.

My theme, Forster and India, debars me from discussing the artistic and other excellences of Passage to India, and I shall confine myself to it politics, which remained relevant for a very long time. The Indian situation changed, but comparable situations sprang up in other parts of the British Empire, and the same mistakes were made. The insolence of British administrators, the behaviour their wives, the thoughtless imposition of unworkable federations, continued till only the other day.

What impact, if any, did it make in England forth five years ago? What impact did it make in India Forster has himself provided an answer to the firs question. In 1962 I asked him what were the India and British reactions to A Passage to India when

appeared in 1924.

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After a John Lalso received a few abusive letters from Anglo-

O: What is your own assessment of the political influence it had on the "Indian question" of the time? Do you it had be political influence was accidental and think its political influence was accidental and exaggerated? think its bad some political influence—it caused people to think of the link between India and Britain and to doubt if that link was altogether of a healthy nature. The influence (political) was not intended; I was interested in the story and the characters. But I welcomed it.

There is no doubt that thoughtful, honest, liberalminded Englishmen and intellectuals both in the Government and outside began to look at the Indian

situation from a different point of view.

The literary intelligentsia were shocked and deeply disturbed. Forster made the British Raj stick in their throats, and it wasn't a comfortable or comforting sensation to live with. Looking beyond and beneath the brilliance of the writing, they began to ask: "What are we up to in India?" As a novelist it was not Forster's responsibility to find political solutions. Morally there could be no justification for one race ruling over another. The problem was posed and an indictment made: the British Raj might win a few battles, but it was losing the war. The English and the Indians could not be friends as long as the Raj lasted. That Indo-British relations took the turn they did during Mountbatten's time is a vindication of what what Aziz says to Fielding at the end of the book. Hope was not abandoned; it was only postponed.

Forster was the first English writer to portray Indians as human beings and not merely as caricatures or doubtful and shifty natives. But he is no Indophile. There are indignant and highly critical portions in Passage and in Devi. He noticed and commented on our inattention to detail, our idleness and incompetence. The Hindu's preoccupation with intrigue and suspicion did not go unnoticed. "Intelligent though they are over intrigues, Indians too can get confused and identify hopes with facts. One is reduced—as are they—to siding with the people one likes....." (HD. 66) He was helpless in the presence of the widespread Hindu habit of referring to almost all religious and metaphysical matters by a perip-

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We took it from him (even Godbole's highbrow incoherence) for two reasons. First, because he was harder on his own people, whose reaction, indeed, proved that "nothing enrages Anglo-India more than the lantern of reason if it is exhibited for one moment after its extinction is decreed." (PI, 173) Second, because he seems to have taken to heart the words of Tagore: "Come inside India, accept all her good and evil: if there be deformity then try and cure it from within, but see it with your own eyes, understand it, think over it, turn your face towards it, become one with it."7

Forster's portrayal of Anglo-India has been disapprovingly commented upon. It has been labelled as exaggerated and uncharitable. But this view does not stand up to close scrutiny. The men who "ruled India" did behave badly, did snub Indians, while their women "knew none of the politer forms [of Urdul and of the world and the world a and of the verbs only the imperative mood" (PI, 45).

paper called the Morning Post revisived by Arga Sarra Foundation Chennal and e Gangotri Diey constantly out-raged Indian sentiments. Even After a year or two it started — the reactions to the book, after independence after independence sections of the British community in certain cities ran their own clubs on racial lines. Such behaviour was not likely to endear them to a free India any more than that of their fathers had endeared them to Forster.

Does Forster do injustice to the British Civil Servants in India? Is he unfair to them? Let us call

Nehru as witness:

They lived in a narrow, circumscribed world of their own Anglo-India - which was neither England nor India. They had no appreciation of the forces at work in contemporary society. In spite of their amusing assumption of being the trustees and guardians of the Indian masses, they knew little about them and even less about the new aggressive bourgeoisie. They judged Indians from the sycophants and office-seekers who surrounded them and dismissed others as agitators and knaves. Their knowledge of post-war changes all over the world, and especially in the economic sphere, was of the slightest, and they were too much in the ruts to adjust themselves to changing conditions. They did not realise that the order they represented was out of date under modern conditions, and that they were approaching as a group more and more the type which T.S. Eliot describes in "The Hollow Men". 8

Forster would have been spared a great deal of criticism if more people in India had read Rose Macaulay's comment: "Some confusion is perhaps caused by the book's doubtful chronology, for it deals with the India of one period, is written largely from material collected and from a point of view derived from that period, and was published twelve years later, when Indians and English had got into quite another stage."9 The "doubtful chronology" of the book did indeed create confusion. It depicts a pre-1914 India and by the time it was published in 1924 events had overtaken it. It appears to be an almost anti-nationalist book, since it makes no mention of the political ferment that was going on

in India in the early 'twenties.

The First World War had changed everything. The Montagu-Chelmsford reforms had not fully met Indian aspirations, Gandhi had launched his noncooperation movement, Tagore had renounced his knighthood after General Dyer had killed 379 peaceful Indians in cold blood in Jallianwallah Bagh. After this, Gandhi, who till then had tolerated the British Raj, became its most outspoken opponent. The book therefore, failed to impress the Indian nationalists, who consisted largely of middle-class intellectuals. It made little or no impact in India. The issues had gone beyond good manners. It succeeded in annoying the British without satisfying Indian political aspirations. Gandhi did not read it. and the highly intelligent and erudite C. Rajagopalachari, the man who succeeded Mountbatten as the first and last Indian Governor-General, did not do so till quite recently. Nehru did, and refers to it in his Autobiography.

It seems odd that a person of Forster's awareness could have been so totally oblivious of what was going on in India in 1921. It is typical of him not to have explained, or to have tried to explain it away. We had to wait for The Hill of Devi to solve the mystery, and even that only on a very close reading.

In a recent article in Encounter Andrew Shonfield says that "Forster had little understanding and no sympathy for the complicated and courageous politics

political antennae were a little more acute and active than Shonfield imagines. Writing about the visit of the Prince of Wales in 1921, Forster in places sounds amazingly like Nehru - although this was the year which saw Nehru in prison for the first

About the Prince of Wales's visit I might also write much. It is disliked and dreaded by nearly everyone. The chief exceptions are the motor-firms and caterers, who will make fortunes, and the non-cooperators and extremists, who will have an opportunity for protest which they would otherwise have lacked The National Congress meets in December at Ahmedabad, and it will certainly carry through its resolution in favour of Civil Disobedience, and if there is general response, this expensive royal expedition will look rather foolish. I have been with pro-Govt and pro-English Indians all this time, so cannot realise the feeling of the other party; and am only sure of this - that we are paying for the insolence of Englishmen and Englishwomen out herin the past. I don't mean that good manners can avert a political upheaval. But they can minimise it, and come nearer to averting it in the East than elsewhere. ... But it's too late. Indians don't long for social intercourse with Englishmen any longer. They have made a life of their own. (HD, 154-5)

Nehru says much the same thing in his Autobiography which The Hill of Devi preceded by nearly

fifteen years.

G. Lowes Dickinson is reported by E. M. Forster, in his recent life of him, to have once said about India: "And why can't the races meet? Simply because the Indians bore the English. That is the simple adamantine fact. is possible that most Englishmen feel that way and it is not surprising. To quote Forster again (from another book), every Englishman in India feels and behaves, and rightly, as if he was a member of an army of occupation, and it is quite impossible for natural and unrestrained relations between the two races to grow under these circumstances. The Englishman and the Indian are always posing to each other and naturally they feel uncomfortable in each other's company. Each bores the other and is glad to get away from him to breathe freely and move

Usually the Englishman meets the same set of Indians, those connected with the official world, and he seldom reaches really interesting people, and if he reached them he would not easily draw them out. The British regime in India has pushed up into prominence, even socially, the official class, both British and Indian, and this class is most singularly dull and narrow-minded. Even a bright young Englishman on coming out to India will soon relapse into a kind of intellectual and cultural torpor and will get cut off from all live ideas and movements. After a day in office. dealing with the ever-rotating and never-ending files, he will have some exercise and then go to his club to mix with his kind, drink whisky and read Punch and the illustrated weeklies from England, He hardly reads books and if he does he will probably go back to an old favourite. And for this gradual deterioration of mind he will blame India, curse the climate, and generally anathematise the tribe of agitators who add to his troubles, not realising that the cause of intellectual and cultural decay lies in the hide-bound bureaucratic and despotic system of government which flourishes in India and of which he is a tiny part.¹¹

Forster always warmed to talk about Jawaharlal Nehru. He met Nehru twice and recalled these meetings with feeling. Nehru's style, his secularism, his internationalism, his quiet but open agnosticism, all appealed to Forster and he was, even when not wholly approving of the turn the Indian National movement was taking, horrified that men like Gandhi and Nehru should be denied the freedom to say their say. Forster once said to me: "Nehru is the most upright and level-headed statesman in

of the Indian independence movement. Digitized by Anya Sangle Toyndation and Coliticisms are generally busy tidying up wins a their past. Your Prime Minister is an exception In 1964, a few weeks after Nehru's death, I gave Forster a copy of Nehru's last will and testament the fort Forster was visibly moved and said how saddened he it is im was at Nehru's passing away. He told an American it." (AH friend of mine that he "would have voted for Nehru with both hands."12

Forster has also been taken to task for choosing him. E a Moslem as the main character in his novel. This aware of hasn't worried the Indians too much. Even after time his partition sixty million co-religionists of Aziz live ly symp in India. Islam is their religion, India their home Russell That Aziz had been taken as the Moslem and sistently Godbole as the Hindu is unfortunate. It is wrong When n and dangerous to talk in such confined terms. Just British as there is no such thing as the real India, there came o is no single individual representing an entire communiof the nity. Forster as a novelist and creative artist was free to choose anyone for his hero. His choice does not make him pro-Moslem or anti-Hindu. The community of the person was unimportant for describing and high-lighting the human predicament, and for describing human relationships.

Forster himself told me: "I think of them - of Aziz and Godbole — as people and not as religious types." And I am content to leave it at that. Forster National has many Moslem friends, and a larger number the cuc of Hindu friends. It is a matter of chance and not

of calculation.

The Hill of Devi finally nails the lie that Forster like Jay does not know his Hindu well. Even given Forster's insight into human character, his gift for finding the right words for the right occasions, his talent for uncovering layer after layer of the human personality, his sturdy moral realism, his aesthetic sense and his sense of the unseen, no one who had not made a study of Hindu philosophy and thought could have written such a book. Raja Rao calls it one of the most Indian books of this century"." Whether he writes about Hindus or Moslems, he penetrales their hearts and the result is dazzling. The sheer authenticity of the dialogue in both books is staggering. His description of the Gokul Ashtami festival is flawless. Forster caught the spirit of the festival and found meaning and significance in Hindu ritual which have eluded or escaped other English writers.

He also took the trouble to study the Bhagavad Gita. Without such a study, his description of Gokul Ashtami would have been superficial. A Hindu festival made him aware of a gap in Christianity: "the canonical gospels do not record that Christ laughed or played. Can a man be perfect il he never laughs or plays? Krishna's jokes may be

vapid, but they bridge a gap." (HD, 119)

Forster had obviously read the Bhagavad-Gita either before or during his first visit in 1912. His essay "Hymn before Action" deserves to be better known. It analyses the central core of the Gita Krishna asks Arjuna to fight and destroy his enemies even though they be his close relatives. Arjuna must fight because it is his duty and that duty has not been assigned to him by chance. Krishna convinces Arjuna, who drives into battle rejoicing, and

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Since Forster sonal 1 careers not ha Raja R told me by add ing up wins a great victory. "But it is necessarily and which had been rejection to followed by dissillusionment and which had been rejection."

rightly followed by dissillusionment and remorse. gave The fall of his enemies leads to his own, for the fortunes of men are all bound up together, and ned ht it is impossible to inflict damage without receiving

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Forster has acknowledged his debt to India and Indians. It is time we acknowledged our debt to oosing him. Even at the best of times Forster has been This aware of the excesses of nationalism and for a long after time his attitude to Indian nationalism was cautiousiz live ly sympathetic, not noisy and erratic like Bertrand home Russell's. In spite of hating "causes", he has conand sistently, quietly, and candidly stood up for India. wrong When many of the professional and loud-mouthed Just British friends of India looked the other way, he there came out strongly in support of India at the time mmul of the Chinese aggression in 1962.

We can urge on our Government and the Governments of the West to supply arms on lend lease, and to increase the aid they give for India's Plans, now that India's own resources have so largely to be devoted to war. Above all, we must try to give additional heart and courage to our Indian friends whose spirit in the crisis is sound and steadfast. On the survival and success of India depends the hope for a better life of one-lifth of the human race. We cannot let the Chinese aggressors destroy this hope. 14

During the Second World War, as President of the orster National Council for Civil Liberties, he took up umber the cudgels on behalf of Jaya Prakash Narayan, nd not who was being tortured in Lahore jail. He was appalled that his countrymen should treat brave patriots orster like Jaya Prakash Narayan in this brutal manner.

Since personal relationship are at the centre of nding Forster's creed, it is appropriate to end on a pernt for sonal note. Without his support and backing the rsona careers of some of India's leading writers would sense not have been possible. I have already mentioned id not Raja Rao and Santha Rama Rau. Mulk Raj Anand ought told me that in 1935 Forster saved him from suicide by adding a preface to his first novel Untouchable,

which had been rejected by seventeen publishers. His generous intervention in 1940 for Ahmed Ali's novel Twilight in Delhi, his discriminating observations about R. K. Narayan, G. V, Desani, and Narayan Menon illustrate his belief that the Indian talent is no less significant than any other, given the chance. His has been truly "the face of a friend" (AH, 337) and what he said of Gandhi is in no small measure applicable to himself:

He is with all the men and women who have sought something in life that is neither chaos nor mechanism, who have not confused happiness with possessiveness, or victory with success, and who have believed in love. 13

NOTES

1 "Rudyard Kipling", My Country Right or Lest (Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters, vol. 2; Secker & Warburg, London, and Harcourt, Brace, New York, 1968), p. 184.

2. Ibid., p. 193.

3. The Legacy of Nehru, ed. K. Natwar Singh (John Day, New York, 1965), p. 67. I am indebted to the publisher for permission to quote.

4. An Autobiography (Bodley Head London, 1936), p. 27. I am grateful to Mrs Indira Gandhi for permission to quote

this and other passages from her father's book.

5. E.M. Forster: A Tribute, ed K. Natwar Singh (Harcourt, Brace, New York, 1964), pp. 79-81.

6. Ibid, pp. xii-xiii.
7. These words from Rabindranath Tagore's novel, Gora (Macmillan, London, 1924), pp. 102-3, are quoted on the title-page of Sir Malcolm Darling's Rusticus Loquitur (Oxford University Press, London, 1930).

8. Nehru, op. cit., p. 443.
9. The Writings of E.M. Forster (Hogarth Press, London, 1938), p. 188. 10. Encounter, XXX (Jan. 1968), 68.

11. Nehru, op. cit, pp. 28-9.
12. In July 1964 I visited Forster, accompanied by an American friend, Jane Goldstone (now Mrs. Ralph Feaver). She kept a record of the meeting and I quote this with her permission.

13. E. M. Forster: A Tribute, p. 28.

14. Letter by E. M. Forster and others in The Spectator, CCIX (30 Nov. 1962), p. 856.

15. E. M. Forster: A Tribute, p. 81. ************************************

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DOCUMENT

Doctor Victimised: Drug Consumer Movement Under Attac

We are enclosing information we have received on the victimisation of Dr Arun Bal, a partner of Action for Rational Drugs in Asia (ARDA) and Health Action International (HAI). As the founder Secretary of the Association for Consumers Action on Safety and Health (ACASH), he is a prominent activist of the drug consumer movement in India. Dr Arun Bal was summarily dismissed from his appointment as surgeon at Dhanwantary Hospital, Bombay, without being given notice or any cause for such action. Several consumer health and development groups in India strongly believe that all circumstantial evidence indicate that his victimisation was engineered by the vested interests in the pharmaceutical industry and medical profession in India.

On December 21, 1988, 15 organisations met in Bombay to protest the victimisation of Dr Bal and to launch a wide defense campaign on his behalf. These organisations are: (1) Medico Friend Cilcle, (2) ACASH, (3) Arogya Dakshata Mandal, (4) Forum Against Oppression of Women, (5) Forum Against Sex Determination, (6) Grahak Andolan, (7) Foundation for Research in Community Health (FRCH), (8) People's Science Institute, (9) Save Bombay Committee, (10) Committee for Protection of Democratic Rights, (11) Women's Centre, (12) Stree Kriti. (13) Centre for Education and Documentation, (14) Consumer Guidance Society of India, (15) Bombay Union

of Journalists.

The defence campaign was supported by several prominent individuals including: Krishna Raj (Editor, Economic and Political Weekly), Dr. N. H. Antia (Director, FRCH), Dr. A. R. Desai (former Head, Deptt. of Sociology; Bombay University) and Dr. R. K. Anand (President, ACASH).

These organisations and concerned individuals strongly appeal for a national and international protest to defend Dr Bal and the drug consumer movement. You can contribute to the defense cam-

paign in the following ways:

- (1) use the enclosed information as material for articles, news items, letters to the editor etc to be published in the English Language dailies or in the vernacular media in your country;
- (2) send and motivate others to send, protest letters to the Management of Dhanwantary Rugnalaya. The letters should be addressed to: President, Brahman Sahayak Sangh, Dhanwantary Rugnalaya. Road No 3, Shivaji Park, Bombay 400 028;
- (3) in Bombay dharnas, public meetings, publishing of posters etc are being organised. Therefore any form of financial assistance to sustain this campaign is welcomed.

Please send a copy of your protest letter, any material published in the press, etc, to: Medico Friend Circle, c/o 34B Naushir Bharucha Road, Bombay 400 007, India.

ARDA clo P. O. Box 1045 10830 Penang Malaysia Dr K Balasubramaniam, Coordinator, ARDA International Coordinator, HAI

(ARDA is a campaign mounted by HAI groups in Asia to promote the adoption of rational drug policies in the region. HAI is an informal cooperating network of consumer, development action and other public interest groups worldwide. It works to further the safe, rational and economic use of pharmaceuticals worldwide in its quest for ,health for all now.)

DR ARUN BAL a practising surgeon and active vocal participant in the nationwide campaign for a rational drug policy in India, has been summarily dismissed from his appointment at the Dhanwantary Hospital without being given notice or cause for such action. The dismissal clearly has nothing at all to do with Dr Bal's professional conduct which colleagues and patients at Dhanwantary will attest to as being immaculate.

The events which have unfolded, point to the fact that Dr Bal's dismissal was connected to his extensive public interest activities, including his active campaigning on drug-consumer issues.

Dr Bal is a founder member and Secretary of the unnerved the drug industry.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Gurukul Kangn Collection, Handwain industry.

Association for Consumers Action on Safety at Health (ACASH) which has been in the forefront drug consumer activities, including the campaign a rational drug policy and for the banning of hard ful drugs. ACASH, a member of All India Draction Network (AIDAN) has campaigned musuccessfully for the ban of high-dose oestrogen-plagesterone (EP) drugs. ACASH has taken this capaign one step further by taking legal action extend the ban to high dose EP injections. This was the result of a concerted effort by the peol with supporting research and documentation groups like ACASH. There is no doubt that this lunnerved the drug industry.

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Dr Bal joined this hospital in September 1984 as a Locum (temporary replacement) to one of the surgeons, Dr Dhayagude, who was on extended leave. In May 1985 the secretary of the Trust managing the hospital, informed Dr Bal that he had been confirmed in his post after another surgeon Dr Karmarkar resigned. In early 1986 the management confirmed his appointment with the agreement of the members of the medical committee. Dr Bal was assured that even if Dr Dhayagude returned, his position was secured. Dr Bal's name then appeared on the July 1986 schedule of the Out Patient Department. In October 1986 when Dr Dhayagude returned, Dr Sane, then the Dean of the Hospital. informed Dr Bal verbally that his services would have to be discontinued. Dr Bal protested and subsequently the matter was discussed at a medical committee meeting during which the majority supported Dr Bal's case. Thereafter Dr Bal was allowed to continue working at Dhanwantary Hospital until his dismissal on November 7, 1988.

Since 1985 Dr Bal had also been assisting a senior surgeon by looking after his patients post-operatively. For the past 10 years it had been the practice in the hospital for surgeons, to assist one another in surgical operations as there had been no qualified resident medical officers for the job. The operation fees were fixed by the hospital and the assisting surgeon was paid a quarter of the surgeon's fees. Dr Bal and the other assistant surgeons were paid according to this scheme. The hospital collected all patients' fees and paid the concerned doctors by cheques within a specified time. The hospital, also collected 10 per cent surcharge on all fees including surgeons' and

assistants' fees.

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Problems Begin

Dr Bal's problems began around June 1988 when he found that his pay cheques were being delayed on some pretext or other. On August 18, 1988 the management issued a circular stating that assistants' fees were not to be charged separately. There was an immediate protest from the doctors and the Dean expressing concern that such an important decision had been taken without prior consultations with them. On September 30, 1986, the management called a meeting of members of the managing committee, the dean and surgeons with the aim of discussing the assistants' fees issues. However, the management used the meeting to level vague allegations against Dr Bal. During the meeting Dr Bal was not given any opportunity to either clarify the details of the allegations made against him or to defend himself. This led Dr Bal to personally examine his financial transactions with the hospital. On investigation he found that a deliberate attempt had been made to implicate and frame him on the issue of payment. Cheques for the months of June and July 1988 were given to him in August 1988. In the two months, the hospital had collected fees in excess of the established fees, in Dr Bal's name, without the established fees, in Dr Bal's name, without his knowledge. Similarly in September 1988 1988, fees for a surgical operation had been collected in his name where in fact no such operation

Appointment at Dhanwantary Hospital had been performed by him. Dr Bal on discovering this, had immediately informed the Dean in writing, that excess fees had been collected and that patients should be refunded for the excess. It would appear that a deliberate attempt had been made since the middle of 1988 to fabricate evidence showing financial irregularity on Dr Bal's part.

Less than two months after this, at 9 45 PM on November 7, 1988, Dr Bal received a letter, hand delivered to his residence, stating that his services had been terminated. The order gave no reason for the termination. Dr Bal had to wait agonisingly for a full day before he could approach the labour court

on this matter.

ACASH had been actively engaged in several activities on the drug-consumer front. By around June 1988, these activities had gathered momentum significantly, and Dr Bal on behalf of ACASH had been collecting evidence against claims made by the manufacturers of Analgin, a pain killer. These evidences had been checked and rechecked by experts in the field and if leaked to the public would prove embarassing to the drug companies.

We would also like to mention here other distressing events related to the issue which had occurred after the termination order was served on Dr Bal.

(1) The management of the hospital had sent a letter to the senior surgeon whom Dr Bal used to assist, asking the following:

(a) Do you require an assistant for cystoscopy?

(b) Have you cancelled any cystoscopy for the lack of an

(c) Have you fixed any fees for the assistant?

The surgeon had answered all the questions in the negative.

The manner in which these que tions had been posed suggested that they were not routine. Considering that the surgeon's replies varied from the true facts — Dr Bal assisted him in all procedures including those specifically mentioned in the questions and looked after the cases post-operatively — we believe that this clearly indicates that the information was meant to be used to injure Dr Bal's professional reputation. We understand that the management may well use the information in this letter to take the matter before the Maharashtra Medical Council. point of interest and concern to note is that the Vice-President of the Trust is also the president of the Maharashtra Medical Council and he is one doctor who has preferred to remain silent on the entire issue.

(2) The documents submitted by the Trust, with their affidavit in reply, reveal that the decision to terminate the services of Dr Bal was taken on October 8, 1988 and was ratified by the Advisors of the Trust. We note with some concern that one of the advisors is a retired judge of the Bombay High Court and ex-President of the Industrial

(3) We note that the Affidavit in reply filed by the Trust in response to Dr Bal's court complaint does not give any reason for his termination either. The Trust has taken the stand that the Labour Act does not apply to it and therefore the court had no juridiction over this matter. The labour court has accepted this plea and has vacated the stay order granted to Dr Bal. Dr Bal has approached the Industrial Court with the revision approached application.

We do not, therefore, see any evidence that Dr Bal's termination is justified or valid. Neither has it got anything to do with his professional conduct. On the contrary, there appears to be a deliberate attempt to malign his reputation by concocting all sorts of false charges. Secondly, the sequence of events points to a well-planned move to oust Dr

From the many circumstantial evidences it is clear that the drugs lobby wanted Dr Bal out and what better way to do this than to deprive him of his best hospital attachment? Thirdly, there appears to be a definite relationship between the various moves made against Dr Bal and his active participation in public issues such as the drug-consumer front. We must not forget that vested interests have, the world over, responded to threats to their empires by carrying out deliberate campaigns to malign and to hurt the reputation of people involved in exposing any of their corrupt practices.

We are convinced that this is an issue that may keep repeating itself whether it involves Dr Bal or any other dedicated medical person working on drug-consumer issues. We note with distress that leading professionals who are office bearers of the medical council and other professional bodies have been totally silent on this issue. We appeal to the

Bal from his post at the Dhanwantary hospital. Medical profession to come out in the open against Opposit such deliberate acts to victimise one of their reported colleagues. At the same time we also feel that this things a is not an issue limited to people in the medical the Sect field alone. There is need for wider debate, public support and concerted action on this issue.

The question uppermost in our minds is: should the edit we allow the drugs and medical lobby. to get away is just with such flagrant victimisation as has happened acciden to Dr Bal? After years of hard work by women's, can seld health, consumer, democratic rights', people's even a rescience and other progressive organisations and collective individuals, a small but very significant and useful rational drugs movement has been built up. It is of our now time for all who care for this movement to my "ive come together to defend Dr Bal. It has to be done Club m now and with concerted effort.

Dr Amar Jesani, Padma Prakash, Anil Pilgaonkar, Ravi Duggal, Medico Friend Circle, Bombay (December 21, 1988). \square

COMMUNICATION

Journalists, Academics, Creativity

This is with reference to M.J. Akbar's article "Media and Writer: Call for Panch Sheela" (Mainstream, March 4, 1989). Akbar's article fascinates me; the points he has raised about the somewhat uncomfortable relationship prevailing between academics and journalism deserve attention. I feel tempted to react because I myself have seen and experienced the "rationale" of both these worlds.

Akbar is right in complaining that there is a tendency - particularly, among academicians to loathe journalism. What they assume is that any piece of "journalistic" writing is necessarily superficial, trivial. And Akbar has rightly said that this complex ought to be explained in terms of their inability to write simply, brilliantly, lucidly. What goes on in the name of "academic" writing, it goes without saying, is so boring that it fails to move the reader, arouse his imagination. As a matter of fact, with the increasing impact of positivism and abstracted empiricism on academics, academicians - particulary, social scientists are becoming incapable of writing anything profound or inspiring. They lack imagination; their expression is poor; words carry no reflexivity, no sensitivity. They deceive through jargons, footnotes, statistics, bibliography. Take up any "academic" journal at random and you feel its absurdity. I say this with confidence because when I compare my own doctoral thesis (from JNU I did my Ph. D. on a sociological problem related to modernity and alienation) with a piece of great literature, I realise the absurdity of the whole academic industry and its rituals. Social scientists with all their big projects, funds, random sampling structured interviews and computers, cannot depict what a

piece of poetry by T.S. Eliot or a novel by Franz

Yet, the absurdity of the academic industry not from w withstanding, I refuse to agree with Akbar when he tries to plead for "journalistic" writing. Akbar has talked about the deadline. I admit that this time constraint makes it difficult for many journalists to write meaningful stories. I remember how during my own journalistic career (I used to work as a lead writer in a progressive daily published from the Capital) I was asked to write a piece of "Gorbachev and Marxism" within two hours. Jour nalists, as a result, become writing machines, the manufacture words, fill up the space, sell the paper

What, however, trivialises journalism - and Akbar is silent about it — is its narrowness, the way it defines "topical", "relevant" news. And this is something with which I have never been able to agree.

Let me elaborate my point. I always loved to write analytical, thematic, reflexive pieces of science, culture, religion, media, violence and etc And every time I was reminded by my editor that "people would not understand it". My colleague snake in used to call me (or abuse me) "philosophical" effects. Editors assume they know better; they have alread quences defined people's tastes; they think that the masse cloning are a stupid lot and nothing fascinates them except political gossips!

An example would suffice. Consider two events to be ex A research scholar has committed suicide. And Minister is speaking at a press conference. Report the univ ters, needless to add, would like to cover the of life to that the Minister would speak the same thing: the insa "law and order" situation of life to the insa "law and order" situation of life to the insa "law and order" situation of life to the insa "law and order" situation of life to the insa "law and order" situation of life to the insa "law and order" situation of life to the life t "law and order" situation has improved or the

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leaders are anti-national! Because gainst Opposition their reporters have been trained to believe that "topical" t this things are only those that happen in Parliament, in edical the Secretariat, in press conferences.

I once wanted to write a lead story on suicide, public its metaphysics. I was naturally discouraged; for hould the editors, suicide is too insignificant an event; it away is just a "page three" news item — like road pened accident or bank robbery or eve-teasing. men's, can seldom realise that not solely Bofors or Fairfax, ople's even a meaningful story on suicide can depict our and collective neurosis.

I tried to argue. I was, however, advised by one useful It is of our Special Correspondents to come down from ent to my "ivory tower". I was advised to go to the Press done Club more frequently, to socialise, to booze, to move around MPs and VIPs!

Ironically, whether Akbar likes it or not, journalism has become a dirty profession. Frankly speaking, barring a few exceptions, the journalists I have seen in my own career are not at all the gifted ones; they are addicted to gossips, scoops; creativity is something they have never experienced. As a result, reading a newspaper is such an unpleasant experience. Columnists know their names sell, they write only gossips; reporters keep on manufacturing stories and all stories are written in the same style - who

said what, who abused whom, who inaugurated What. Words, simply words. Absurd!

To experience truth one needs an intensity of experience. True knowledge can emerge only through suffering and struggle. And only then can words get mingled with deep, profound experiences, become potent once again and move us to alter ourselves, alter the world around us. That is the power of truly good, meaningful, creative writing.

I ask both Akbar and any academician - how do you, for example, categorise Antonio Gramsci? Never did Gramsci attend any "press conference" or move around the ruling elites. And never did Gramsci occupy a faculty position and get big projects and huge funds. Instead, he suffered, spent his days in Mussolini's jail and we received that supremely powerful exercise: Selections from Prison Noiebooks.

That is creativity. And, in the ultimate analysis, history remembers only those who suffer and struggle and create - Marx and Gramsci, Tagore and Kafka, Dostoyevsky and Tolstoy — not "popular" columinists, "best-selling" aurhors, editors, deans, Vice-Chancellors.

March 10, 1989

Avijit Pathak A 7/32, Sheesh Mahal Colony, Kamachha, Varanasi, UP

Sumit: Pak Adventurism in Afghanistan

(Contd. from page 6)

persons who have the best of ties with the country

not from where they originally hailed).

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New Delhi has the bounden duty as the most Akbai prominent leader of the non-aligned movement in at this this region to convincingly convey to the warring ourna. groups in Afghanistan that as none can win a clearcut how victory in the battlefield, political negotiations for a work broadbased coalition government in the country lished (representing all shades of opinion resolved to rebuild ce of and unify the Afghan nation) through the instrument out of the impasse. And by this way one could hope to (a) strengthen peace in the South Asian region; (b) preserve the integrity of Afghanistan; and (c) enhance Afghanistan's security as a non-aligned out of the impasse. And by this way one could hope to (a) strengthen peace in the South Asian region; (b) preserve the integrity of Afghanistan; and state. Jour of national reconciliation are the only civilised way

New Delhi should not be hamstrung by the fear of

embarrassing Benazir by such a step. On the contrary, if the Pak Premier really desires to take a positive stand on the Afghan issue and bridle the Pak military's ambitions, she would be emboldened to do so by such an Indian move that is not in the least intended against Pakistan's national interests, security and unity but actually aimed at reactivating the UN (that played the most crucial role in giving shape to the Geneva Accords) for preventing renewed violence that threatens to acquire for bigger proportions than hitherto envisaged and also engulf the Pakistani polity in the process. Such an initiative on the part of India — which is bound to evoke positive response from all sections of Pak democrats capable of visualising the frightening consequences of the Pak military circles' adventurous course in Afghanistan - should be undertaken at the earliest without the slightest hesitation. For what is at stake is peace, stability and security in our entire neighbourhood.

K.R. Narayanan: Biotechnology

(Contd. from page 10)

New bread grows on trees. And roasted pigs run about Crying "Eat me, if you please."

There is a second of Eden without or that There is, however, no Garden of Eden without a eague snake in it. Biotechnology has also its adverse effects. We do not yet know the long-term conselread quences of playing with the genes of living organisms, masse cloning them, splitting them, indeed tampering with the still inscrutable balance of nature and the ultimate mysteries of the still inscrutable balance of nature and the ultimate mysteries of life. All one can say is that one has got to be extracted. events to be extremely cautions and think deeply over the the universal state of the secrets Report the universal order, while we delve into the secrets of life to the secrets and chemistry the of life tampertng with the geometry and chemistry the insatiable greed of man.

We also ought to We also ought to ask, if the final solution to the endlessly increasing wants of man is only, more and yet more production, and the incessant multiplication of goods, or if some checks and restraints ought not to be put on this ceaseless escalation of human population and the even greater augmentation of human needs and cravings. Perhaps this is too philosophical a question to be posed to geneticists and biotechnologists. But then are not geneticists like particle physicists playing in that extreme border regions of science that are nearest to philosophy and metaphysics?

Let us hope that the scientists from our ancient Asian region will keep this thought at the back of their minds, in the midst of their dedicated efforts to find solutions, through biotechnology, for some of the current crying needs of our people for, food and energy.

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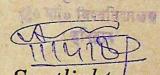
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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



Deflecting the Spotlight

MIDST the din and bustle in Parliament touched off by the Thakkar Report, some significant points emerge which need to be noted for the long-run viability

of Indian democracy.

At the outset it must to be said that the Government cannot be faulted for not placing before Parliament all the material connected with the Thakkar Commission. Confidential reports from various agencies or individual depositions are never considered ipso facto as part of a Commission report, and as such the Government is not necessarily obliged to place them alongwith the report. In this context, Minister Chidambaram's defence of the Government position was valid. At the same time, in view of the prevailing confusion and distrust, the Prime Minister could have discussed the matter in his chamber with the Opposition leaders - many of whom are former Ministers - and could have thrashed the matter out with them. It would be unwise to assume that the Treasury Benches alone are

the sole repository of a sense of responsibility.

The present controversy has brought to the forefront the question of public investigation into any major issue of public concern With all due respect to the judiciary, one has to note that members of the Bench - even of the august one in the imposing Supreme Court - are of uneven competence and integrity. The erosion of values that has overtaken our public life today has not left untouched the cloistered precincts of justice, and in the public eye individual judges command public confidence or are bereft of it. From all that has appeared of this Commission Report, it is obvious that the Government's selection of Justice Thakkar to conduct the enquiry into such an important subject as the assassination of the then Prime Minister of India is, to say the least, unfortunate and disappointing. The Commission Report, as it has appeared, makes appallingly poor reading - the lack of any sense of judgement, any CC-0. In Puter adulation Lkup Kandin Collection Hardward from hearsay — and one wonders how the Government accepted this Report.

only that. The same Justice Thakkar was later entrusted with probe into the engagement of the American investigative agency, Fairfax, Finance Ministry to unearth Swiss bank accounts. In that probe, Justice Thakkar blamed all those whom the Rajiv establishment wanted to be blamed - from V.P. Singh to Bhure Lal. Since the allegations in the Thakkar Report on Indira Gandhi's assassination have had to be reversed by the Anandram Report, should there be no similar review of Justice Thakkar's performance in the Fairfax case? The learned judge has already earned a reputation of rather extravagant obiter dicta in the Indira assassination case. Such effusions on his part in the Fairfax case certainly deserve a second look.

Secondly, the Prime Minister in February this year reinstated Dhawan to a post in government senior to the one he was holding when sacked in 1985. The explanation given by the Government now is that the Special Investigation Team headed by a senior police officer, Anandram, has in the meantime exonerated Dhawan of all the charges and suspicions pointed at him by the Thakkar Report. This means that in the eyes of the Rajiv Government serious allegations sustained by a judge can be quashed by the word of a police team.

Thirdly, by releasing the Thakkar Report's detailed allegations against Dhawan and holding back the corresponding details of the Anandram Report, the Government has been unfair to both Dhawan and Rajiv who has reinstated him. In fact, this has made the position of both of them politically untenable. In the eyes of the public, Dhawan will be under some cloud of distrust if not suspicion, while the Prime Minister would be regarded as whimsical, if not irresponsible, in reposing confidence in him.

Fourthly, the immediate political impact of the storm over the Thakkar Report in Parliament has been that the Opposition parties have come together more solidly than on any issue in the past. Correspondingly, one could discern indications of severe strain on the cohesion and morale within the Congress-I party as

a result of the current controversy. All though there were the usual noisy interrup tions of the Opposition by the ruling part MPs, what is indeed significant is that many of them were genuinely confused as to what the Government had been doing in mishandling the entire case. Not sur prisingly, Dhawan's case became the foca point of agitated discussion within the Congress-I. Those who are known to be pro-Dhawan began attacking those who were no friends of Dhawan when he was working under Indira Gandhi. The outburst of Kalpanath Rai, an Dhawan supporter, against Fotedar, never known to be pro-Dhawan, is a case in point. Although Kalpanath Rai has denied having given a press interview against Fotedar on this count, discreet silence prevailed when the tape recording of the interview was offered to be played to refute his denial.

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Even apart from this ministerial-level Billingsgate, the confusion is widespread over the manner in which Rajiv Gandhi himself has changed his views on Dhawan from aliergy to confidence in course of five years. The allergy predated Thakkar Commission, while the circumstances behind Dhawan's return to Rajiv's confidence is still shrouded in mystery. This was the key question which the Opposition should have asked the Prime Minister and not the publication of confidential documents pertaining Thakkar Report.

It appears that the Government side now hopes to extricate itself from the jam over the Thakkar Report by deflecting the spotlight on the discovery of a bigger conspiracy behind Indira Gandhi's assassination. This was the stand taken by the Government spokesman during the Parlia ment debate on the Thakkar Report. While nobody in his senses would deny the possibility of such a conspiracy, it 15 not without significance that this is getting high-visibility treatment from the Govern ment just at the very moment when it was placed in an awkward position over the disclosures of the Thakkar Report. indicated in this column two weeks ago, the expectations seem to be that the repeat presentation of the Indira assassination of

a wider-bodied screen would be of advantage to the Government about to face a formidable election challenge.

A clear indication of this strategy was available from Rajiv Gandhi's speech at the Congress-I-run National Students' Union convention on April 4 in which he demogogically harangued against the Opposition as abettors of the conspirators who killed Indira — a rather intemperate and unfounded accu-sation. Incidentally, in the same speech he attacked the non-Congress-I Government in Assam for not being able to curb the Bodo agitation, in contrast

with his to tal silence on the failure of the J&K Government to put down the anti-India agitation in the Kashmir valley. One could almost sense the electioneering rhetoric in Rajiv Gandhi's approach.

It is, however, doubtful if such a strategy will be effective at all for the Congress-I this time. The immediate upshot will be the accentuation of bitter confrontation between the Congress-I and its opponents instead of helping to unify the people for an honest and serious examination of all the malaise damaging the sturdy matrix of this great nation.

April 5

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A Symbol of Morals in Politics

veteran freedom fighter, one of the tallest A figures in the socialist movement in India, a prominent trade unionist, a leading crusader for a unilingual Marathi State, a noted journalist, Shridhar Mahadeo Joshi was all that and much more.

A founder member of the Congress Socialist Party in the early thirties; General Secretary of the 1955 all-party Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti; Chairman of the Praja Socialist Party in 1963 and President of the Samyukta Socialist Party (formed by the PSP's merger with the Socialist Party in 1964) he remained till his last breath "a Gandhian among socialists and a socialist among Gandhians", as President Venkataraman has aptly noted in his message of condolences.

With S.M. Joshi's demise in Pune on April 1 has been snapped another link with the national movement galvanised by Mahatma Gandhi since the twenties. He was indeed a saint in Indian politics, one of the rarest specimens in today's jet-set world of polyvastra khadiwallahs thronging near the seat of power. And that is why his impact on the national scene would be of an enduring nature unlike the

present-day upstarts on our political horizon.
What distinguished "SM", as the socialist leader was known to his countless admirers cutting across political affiliations and ideological inclinations, was the ascetic streak in him inspired as he was by the world-view of Sane Guruji, the sage of the Amalner Ashram. He strove for realising an egalitarian society based on the ideals of Marx and Gandhi as well as the dedication of M.N. Roy. Obviously he eschewed the dogmatism of the fanatic Communists whose number is thankfully now dwindling. But he had no hesitation in joining hands with all including Communists for any just cause, as seen from his approach during

the Samyukta Maharashtra movement and in unifying the trade union movement of the Bombay textile workers.

Motivated at an early age by social reformers like Dr Ambedkar besides Gandhiji he could neither be doctrinaire nor a cynic. SM was committed to idealism — the ideal of valuebased politics grounded on morality. At the same time he was never a recluse having proved his mettle as a tireless organiser of extra-constitutional forms of struggle during both the Quit-India movement of 1942 and the fight against the Emergency Raj in 1975-77. He was among the front-rank figures of the Janata Party but like Jaya Prakash Narayan kept away from power and always shunned publicity.

On a different plane he proved to be an effective parliamentarian as well when he was elected to the Lok Sabha from Pune at the height of the anti-Congress wave sweeping the

country in 1967.

His very preachings and practices, steeped as he was in Gandhian traditions while professing loyalty to socialist outlook, made him an ajatshatru. Though he passed away after having led a full and vibrant purposeful life, the death of S M leaves a deep void in our sociopolitical life that can hardly be filled today. The nation has lost a selfless fighter for the people's causes, against inequality, inequity and oppression - legal, economic, social, political. The loss is indeed irreparable. This is not just a cliche but the candid admission of the stark reality as it obtains in our political scenario at present.

Mainstream offers its sincere homage to the memory of this saintly figure who stoically withstood the rigours of bone cancer, the deadly disease that ultimately claimed his life after subjecting him to the painful torture of protracted illness.

Panchayats: Centre's Politicking

L.C. JAIN

WITH one stroke of the pen, the Maharashtra branch of the Congress-I has punctured the Prime Minister's panchayat balloon. On February 22, the Maharashtra Government decided to postpone elections to the zilla panchayats by yet another year. Only three weeks earlier (January 28) the Prime Minister had assured 8000 panchayat representatives (including a large contingent from Maharashtra) that he was opposed to the postponement of the panchayat elections. Indeed, he added that the Constitution would be amended within the year to guarantee the holding of the panchayat elections on schedule.

We waited for a month in the hope that the Prime Minister would persuade his party's Government in Maharashtra to reconsider and rescind its decision. But the wait has been in vain. And what is worrisome is that the leadership is not even embarrassed by this wide gulf between what it preaches and the practice. In spite of the Maharashtra development, the Prime Minister has continued to repeat his resolve to back up the panchayat elections with a constitutional guarantee, to wit: his speeches at the conference of panchayat representatives from amongst Scheduled Castes on February 24 and Scheduled Tribes on March 3.

The author is a well known social scientist.

Are we to understand that the ruling party will not hold the panchayat elections on the due date unless obliged to do so by a constitutional guarantee? If such is the depth of commitment of its leaders to the panchayats then what is the cash value of constitutional guarantee? The Constitutional guarantee? The Constitution by itself is a mere ream of paper. It is worked or unworked by human agents representing individuals parties chosen to govern.

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We have been bitten more than once in the past, Remember that elementary education was ordained to be universalised within 12 years of the passing of the Constitution, that is, by 1962? But we are at least half a century away from that goal even

today.

The consequences of this are highlighted by the latest occasional paper of the Census of India. According to it there was not even one literate member in 33 per cent of the total number of households in the country in 1981. In Bihar, the percentage of such households was as high as 45 per cent, in Andhra, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh it was over 40 per cent.

A budget leak is regarded as a calamity, and some heads are supposed to roll. Here the budgets in the past four decades have leaked all their munificence on everything else but elementary education. But no leader has come forward to offer even an apology

Don't mention it, the pressure is entirely mine

From Abu's File

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Another instance of a fake interest in the panchayats is the attempt by the Central leadership to divert attention from the discussion of the prerequisites for the success of the panchayats and to limit the discussion to internal structure of the panchayats. This is revealed by a scrutiny of the issues listed for discussion at the aforesaid three panchayat raj conferences and a puerile 'no', 'yes', questionnaire given to the participants. For example, though the conferences of Schedule Castes and Scheduled Tribes panchayat representatives in February and March, followed a January 1989 study (by the National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes) titled Pandhayat Raj-An Appraisal of the Current Situation and Suggestions for Improvement, its vital conclusions and recommendations were deliberately withheld from these conferences.

The very first recommendation of the above study was that "the process of democratic decentralisation does not mean only handing over some power and funds to the local bodies but encompasses the whole gamut of relationships that should guide the federal government the States and the democratically elected people's institutions ... It would be wrong to attempt decentralisation isolatedly from the State to the panchayati raj institutions. The starting point must be the federal government which has to

What was regarded by the study as the starting point was not brought on the agenda of these conferences, either at the start or the middle or the end. The reasons are obvious.' Though paying lip sympathy to decentralisation, the Central Government is not ready to countenance any suggestion for deconcentration of its own powers. In the 1989-90 budget, is is proposed "to decentralise implementation" of NREP and RLEGP, that is schemes of seasonal wage employment. Not, what is proposed to be decentralised is the implementation and not the planning of these schemes. This defies the wisdom of all studies on the subject.

For instance, in the words of the Union Ministry of Programme Implementation, a major bottle-neck in the efficient use of scarce resources for poverty alleviation is that "plans and programmes are still formulated from the top and do not emanate from the bottom". Almost every scheme of poverty alleviation is not only centrally-sponsored but centrallyconceived. A committee of the National Development Council had recommened three years ago the discontinuation of the centrally sponsored character

enable the latter to encourage the emergence of

village-sponsored schemes. But the report of the committee never saw the light (Continued on page 10)

of such schemes and the transfer of related funds

for poverty alleviation to the States, untied, to

Towards Watershed in World Politics

EDUARD SHEVARDNADZE

Eduard Shevardnadze, the Soviet Foreign Minister, answered a wide range of questions in an interview he gave to Patriot, the Indian daily, recently. The interview (published on April 5, 1989) provides an idea of the Kremlin's thinking on global and regional issues. Excerpts from the -Editor interview are being carried here by courtesy of Patriot.

WE justly believe that the nuclear problem has been at the focus of world politics during the last decades. To be more precise, it has been the search for an answer how to avoid a nuclear catastrophe, how to stop the nuclear arms race and how

to strengthen international security. I believe that mankind has survived in these nuclear decades thanks to the progress of an antinuclear tendency. Having emerged as a humanistic, intellectual and emotional non-acceptance of nuclear weapons, this tendency has found its embodiment in a number of major international landmark agreements—the Partial Test Ban Treaty of 1963, the Treaty of 1963. Treaty of Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons of 1968, the Soviet-American agreements on the limitation of strategic arms, as well as in the Treaty on the Limitategic arms, as well as in the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems.

The most important political conclusion reached at the summit meeting of the leaders of the USSR and the USSR and the USA—that no victory could be achieved in nuclear war and that such war should not be fought - has been its natural consummation.

And, lastly, such historic documents have come into being as Mikhail S. Gorbachev's statement of January 15, 1986, on the ways of transition towards a nuclear-free world, and the Delhi Declaration on the principles for a nuclear-weapon-free and nonviolent world.

Another tendency which has been shaping the present day international relations is the internationalisation of the problem of development in its political, economic, ecological and social aspects. Today, there is no more need to prove that the world, the civilisation will not be able to survive unless the task of providing a decent living for every

man on earth is fulfilled.

I would also like to single out quite a new tendency - the turn towards political settlement of regional conflicts through collective efforts, which has resulted in the emergence of a much-promising series of positive changes in Afghanistan, South (Continued on page 33)

MAINETREAM April 8, 1989 CC-0. In Public Domain. Gurukul Kangri Collection, Haridwar

Satanic Verses: Postmortem

SYED ALI MUJTABA

The furore over *The Satanic Verses* is now quite a high profile problem which does not merely remain an intellectual tug of war but touches the international political chords. If we analyse the problem objectively then three distinct patterns emerge. First, the problem is a clash of two world views, the different outlooks of two civilisations an unending debate on the superiority of mind over faith. The second aspect is the social role of religion in the modern age. The third dimension is the political harvest reaped by escalating the issue into a crisis.

Tradition versus modernity, change versus continuity is a theme argued right since renaissance and reformation. The Western society took a quantum leap in every sphere of life as Protestantism gave rise to capitalism and industrial revolution brought unprecedented material progress. With this, a new outlook developed and a radical departure from structured thoughts, streotypes and cliches become fashionable. Individuality became the sheet anchor of life and material pursuit was its success touchstone. The West took pride in the superiority of mind over faith. What is true and just should qualify on the test of logic and the rest is to be discarded. In this thought-process religion took a back seat and profit became the sine qua non of life; whereas in the East the pace of development was not so dramatic and, therefore, people adhered to what they believed. Religion provided a world view which is above individual and society, whose tenets, at the same time, were to be adored and obeyed. It provided an answer to the complex set of problems confronting man, his emotional feelings and attitudes towards the mysteeries and perplexties of life. It kept aside the hazards of the capitalistic society and checked the desire to go haywire. The soothing and energising purpose of religion attracted people totake shelter beneath it for solace and consolation.

In this clash of world views it is difficult to ascertain which idea is the better of the two but the fact remains that the ascendance of the West stands on the dynamics of rationality although there is a limit to its elasticity and after which the vision becomes blurred. While the decadence of the East is due to the overriding influence of religion but distinction from worldly preoccupation to inner wordly ascetism nevertheless acts as a powerful rationalising force guiding the future course of development. In this catch-twentytwo situation it is difficult to choose the victor as both sides match each other in the trial of strength.

The second point in question is the social role of religion in modern times and the rationale of its

The author is a Research Scholar on South Asian Studies in the School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. survival as an ideological tool. Though religion is a highly personal thing and its physical manifestation has created a lot of problems but still faith in the supernatural keeps the interest in life alive and makes the individual bear his sufferings and disappointments. There are some moral norms and values essential for the maintenance of social structure as they enable the individual to control the action of self and others through which an order is perpetuated. These social values are never rationally or scientifically demonstrated, they are presented and accepted as beyond question or even examination. As a result of this distinction between the sacred and the profane, religion becomes a supremely integrating and unifying force in human society. If we see the present controversy over The Satanic Verses in this backdrop then we can get some justification to the worldwide discontentment of the Muslims.

In this context the nature of Islam is quite conspicuous in the order of world religion. It sees its existence in collectivity and percieves religion above individuality. Any attack on its basic tenets invites furore and rage. Its institutional structure and theological hierarchy is so strong that it can whip up emotions of the whole generation to its side. The role of clergy as being the thought-police of the faith can be argued but they definitely have an edge over the liberal brand in sensitive matters. The reason for this is probably the cocooned nature of Islam as a result of the influence of great tradition since quite long. Its orthodoxy and puritanism is because of its inward-looking attitude which has prevented it from adapting to the modern needs. An answer to this has been put forward by speculating that the present anger and frustration is a reflection of a middle-aged religion which is still quite young to show soberness and maturity and is expected in course of time to act with cool judgment. With this event what emerges is that the humanist trend of religion is still in its embryo and asks a patient waiting to see its evolution, rising above all dogmas and prejudices in the shape of a constructive societal force worth preserving.

As far as the political dimension is concerned, it is not to deny the fact that the institutionalised system of beliefs and values that provides followers of Islam with the solution to the question of ultimate being is seriously injured by The Satanic Verses. Nevertheless, one has to submit that the problem, though universal in nature, has a regional variation and a crisis of collective group identity looking for an opportunity to unfold itself. It has taken an unfair political mileage by balooning into a political crisis

If we analyse the case of India, Muslims as a religious group have a political stake and alongwith the cast matrix, play a significant role in national politics. Whenever the opportunity arises they assert as a polical force and do not want to remain in the wilderness. They strongly feels their sense of loss of power and look for an opening to assert their claim. The two riots which took place long after the ban of the book in Kashmir and Bombay had

(Continued on page 35)

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Children on the Frontline

This is a summary of the third edition of the special report "Children on the Frontline" published by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) bringing out the impact of apartheid, destabilisation and warfare on children in southern and South Africa. The report was first published in 1987. In addition to expanded and updated texts covering southern Africa and South Africa, the new version, for the first time, contains a section on Namibia. This was released on Tuesday, April 4, 1989 in Harare:

The full text is available from UNICEF offices or by writing to the Division of Information and Public Affairs, UNICEF House, 3 United Nations Plaza, New York, New York 10017, USA.

The authors of the report are: Dereje Asrat, Reginald Herbold Green, Marta Mauras and Richard Morgan (southern Africa); H.M. Coovadia, Mamphela Ramphele and Francis Wilson (South Africa); and Reginald Herbold Green (Namibia).

— Editor

SOUTHERN AFRICA

Introduction

The nine countries of the Southern Africa Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) — Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe — have a population of some 70 million. Out of approximately three and a half million annual births, some 750,000 children die before the age of five.

The economies of all SADCC countries have suffered from economic destabilisation, from armed attack and from the necessity to maintain abnormally high levels of security expenditure. In Angola and Mozambique fighting has caused a worsening of nearly every measurement of child welfare.

Twentyfive children are dying every hour from the effects of war in southern Africa. Over 11 million Angolans and Mozambicans have been driven from their homes at least once — some 1.5 million into refuge in neighbouring states and over nine million into rural or urban refuge at home.

Since 1980, over one million people have been killed directly or indirectly by these two conflicts—more than the total number of soldiers the United States has lost in all its wars since 1776. Since 1980, about 850,000 infants and young children have perished who could have lived.

Droughts, floods, lack of access to hard currency, falling terms of trade, rising debt service, the legacy of past mistakes in domestic policy — all these play a role in undermining the health and welfare of the children of southern Africa. But the main culprits are war and economic pressure, whose targets are not only economic and military but also the social and the destruction of health and education facilities, production, and the constriction of development and social budgets.

The refugee influx has been especially disrupting for Malawi which suffers from severe land shortages in areas along the Mozambique border.

Health and Education

At independence, Mozambique inherited an illiteracy rate of 93 per cent and over 70 per cent of the population of 10 million lived beyond the reach of any form of health care. In Angola, illiteracy was perhaps 85 per cent and the proportion without effective access to the health system was probably higher.

The post-independence policies of both Angola and Mozambique gave high priority to primary health care. As a result, by 1980, life expectancy at birth had increased to 41 years in Angola and 45 in Mozambique, while the mortality rate among underfives (U5MR) had been reduced to 260 and 270 per 1000, respectively.

Very substantial improvements in immunisation rates achieved in the 1970s have been endangered by economic recession (Tanzania, Zambia) or reversed by war (Angola, Mozambique).

Botswana and Zimbabwe have the strongest health programmes, while Lesotho, Swaziland Tanzania have sustained or regained a forward momentum. Malawi had shown some improvement until the refugee tidal wave of 1980-88. Angola and Mozambique, after considerable groundwork in 1975-1978 and rapid progress in 1979-1980, have since slipped back.

In almost all the countries of the region, poor peasant families in marginal areas have been severely affected by drought. Surveys in Mozambique confirm serious problems of acute malnutrition in the most war-affected areas. More than half of young Mozambican children now suffer from some form of malnourishment.

By 1982 Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe virtually achieved universal primary school enrolment while Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland reached comparable levels by 1986. Angola had 66 per cent in 1982, but terrorist violence, dislocation of people and budgetary constraints caused that figure to drop below 50 per cent. The destruction of rural schools has held Mozambique's primary school enrolment to around 46 per cent. Educational quality has also

decline have forced cuts in books, equipment, furniture, writing materials and maintenance of buildings.

The position in Angola and Mozambique today should be comparable to that of Tanzania where the U5MR was 185 per 1000 in 1985 and is now 179. By contrast, in Angola and Mozambique the U5MR had risen to an estimated 325 to 375 per 1000 by 1985 and at best has remained static since.

The economic and human cost of war

In Angola, 700,000 of the most severely affected peasants displaced by war are totally dependent on government assistance for survival. In Mozambique, 3.3 million rural residents are currently estimated to be at risk of famine, largely because of the destruction of food crops and transport capacity.

Trauma among children is widespread. In Mozambique, estimates of children traumatised, orphaned or abandoned run from 350,000 to 500,000, or up to 10

per cent of the age group.

Steps toward a better future

Above all, the children of southern Africa need peace. Without it, the development of social services cannot be resumed, economic expansion regained and family lives returned to normality. With peace, international assistance, national governments and communities could combine in effective reconstruction, which will include the following;

restore or sustain and strengthen child, mother and household survival, services especially in rural areas; restore family food security—already eroded

by drought and poverty as well as by war;

- access to clean water, which remains central to reducing infant and child deaths; special programmes to rehabilitate young victims of physical multilation and of trauma, through schools and other community-based structures.

- At the national levels, the most basic requirements are transport and fuel security. Without transport and finance, the region's potential for basic self-

sufficiency in food will remain unrealised.

-Safeguarding household income turns on sustaining economic activity to preserve existing employment and services, on restoring production capacity to displaced rural households and on creating employment.

-A major requirement in the case of Botswana, Lesotho, southern Mozambique and Swaziland is safeguarding the power supply. Overall, the largest

requirement is finance for infrastructure.

-Food aid is needed to provide relief and supplementary feeding to displaced persons and refugees,

Unless these broad goals can be achieved, general economic malaise will affect the provision of basic services and reduce the quality of life for households and children.

The cost will be at least US \$ 1 billion a year and perhaps as high as US \$ 2.5 billion a year. War and economic destabilisation prevent these states from undertaking or servicing substantial external debt.

Such a programme could reverse the appalling losses of human life and of productivity. If it is

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and Cangotri over 150,000 southern Africa about 70 suffered because war costs and related economic infants and young children will continue to infants and young children will continue to di each year because of the war and its econom consequences, as they did in 1988.

NAMIBIA

Introduction

Namibia's children have had to endure the won deaths of two evils: the apartheid system imposed by Sou life. In Africa and a brutal war.

Over 60 per cent of Black households live absolute poverty, below US \$ 450 per year. average White household income as of 1986 was

about US \$ 9000.

Over 300,000 Namibians are displaced persons their own country and about 100,000 are exile disrupted The displacement and the dislocation of rural to be out a have further weakened food security, and the co has hind centration of 200,000 persons around the three smallimited a towns of the Oshakati Triangle has led to seve shortages of clean water.

In Namibia, life expectancy at birth for Blacks approximately 40 years. This is comparable to wa ravaged Angola but below the 46 to 56 years range

of other countries in the region.

The U5MR rate is 300, a figure which company very unfavourably with all independent souther African States except Angola and Mozambique.

Full innoculation coverage of one-year-old against TB, DPT, polio and measles is about

per cent.

Household food security in rural areas is at mu greater risk than is national food security. central issue of malnutrition which appears to affe upto 50 per cent of Black Namibian infants at young children is one of ability to afford to buy be able to grow sufficient food.

Household incomes of poor and vulnerable groups

Over 60 per cent of Black Namibian household are in absolute poverty, 30 per cent moderate above that level and 10 per cent substantially about poverty lines. The proportion of Black Namibial living in absolute poverty has risen steadily over past decade, as war, drought and external cond tions have eroded their economic ability to cope.

The social and economic consequences of males-only contract system and other aspects of 1 apartheid/colonial system have imposed soci patterns of fragmentation and instability.

Rehabilitation in exile

For Namibians in the refugee camps in Angola 8 Zambia organised by the South-West Africa People Organisation (SWAPO), however, the situation of women and children is different. Their prima health care system and nutritional levels are amountained and analysis are amountained analysis are amountained and analysis are amountained and analysis are amountained analysis are amoun the best in the region and education for children al for mothers is extensive.

The picture presented by the quality of life if cators for the 75,000 in exile living in SWAPO Kwanza Sul-Viana complex of camps has be markedly different from that shown for Namibil living under the occupation regime. Infant and chi mortality in these exile communities appears to

The price Throu the break and dete. country, the war

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(vi) (for e Africa about 70 per thousand live births, including an IMR supply and sewage recycling system); to d of 50 or less.

The price of occupation

Throughout Namibia, militarisation, censorship, the breaking up of political meetings, political arrests and detentions, strike-breaking, police brutality and deaths in custody have been facts of everyday Sourlife. In the 'operational zone', in the north of the country, the situation has been even worse. live the war waged by South Africa and its Black merceor. Thary auxiliaries has led to a situation comparable 186 we to that in the war-affected zones of Angola and

Rural life in northern Namibia has been totally e exile disrupted. Living in rural areas has been unsafe. To ural le be out after curfew is to risk death, a situation which the con has hindered field work during peak seasons and ee smallimited access to hospitals and clinics. Terror tactics o sever — including beatings, torture, rape and murder — have been widely used.

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For over 300,000 persons continued occupation to wa has resulted in displacement to peri-urban areas, lacks rs rang often characterised by squalid and economically precarious conditions. For 100,000 Black Namibians it ompan has meant going into exile.

The transition to independence

Priorities during the transition to independence include expanded basic drug provision, mobility support, food for supplementary feeding, primary health worker training and rural clinic rehabilitation. At the same time, emergency situations, such as the condition of the displaced persons in the Oshakati triangle, could be more effectively tackled.

A significant number of the 300,000 plus urban or peri-urban displaced rural dwellers (largely from Ovambo and Kavango) may wish to return to their farms. They will require assistance with food until the first harvest, as well as seeds, tools, housing materials and health and water rehabilitation projects.

In the transitional period the focus in health and education fields will be on launching pilot training and trainer-training programmes for Namibians.

Children after independence

The key elements in Namibian rehabilitation and development after independence are:

(i) Ensuring food security at both household and national levels, including increased crop, livestock

and dairy production by small farmers; (ii) Building a universal access primary health care system (including immunisation with adequate drug supplies, mobility, rural clinics and community based health workers);

(iii) Creating a broadly based education system;

(iv) Broadening employment and self-employment opportunities — especially for women — to reduce the property of the property the proportion of very poor households which cannot provide provide adequate nutrition, housing, clothing and care to form care to family members including children;

(v) Restoring overal economic growth to provide a

broadening base for public service provision; (vi) Avoiding breakdowns in any crucial sector (for example, mining) or unit (for example, water

(vii) Developing social rehabilitation and empowerment programmes for victims of war-related trauma, especially children and mothers, and for displaced persons or returned exiles;

(viii) Providing for manpower development and expatriate recruitment adequate to provide the per-

sonnel necessary to carry out the programmes.

Priority external inputs are likely to include staple food, basic drugs, paper for printing texts, vehicle to provide mobility for basic services, training places and operational personnel.

Conclusion

The cost of post-independence programmes for Namibia is estimated at about US \$ 100 million a year. With such a programme, the country could quickly rise to near the top of social indicators in southern Africa, while restructuring the economy to

provide five per cent annual growth.

Namibians have a special claim on the international community. Not only have they been the victims of struggles carried out in defence of apartheid; since 1920 their land has been an international trust territory under the League of Nations and then under the United Nations. The time has now come for the international community to honour its obligations by providing the material, knowledge and personnel support for the rehabilitation and development of independent Namibia.

SOUTH AFRICA

Introduction

For children in South Africa, life's chances are determined by race. The probability of survival at birth and in infancy, access to health services, immunisation, susceptibility to preventable diseases, adequate housing, quality of health care, education, employment, income: all these and more depend upon ethnic classification. Studies show that inequality in South Africa is the highest of any of the 57 countries in the world for which data are avail-

With a per capita gross national product six or seven times higher than that of China or Sri Lanka, South Africa has a life expectancy at birth less than four-fifths of the two much poorer countries.

Apartheid has a devastating effect on children, making them racist or violent - or both. Children are brutalised, not only by the physical violence but also by the structural violence. Particularly damaging are the situations where children may be socialised into vandalism or find themselves having to adopt violent measures as a matter of survival and, in the process, losing any sense of right and wrong.

A place to live

Diseases such as gastro-enteritis, measles and tuberculosis, which wreak such havoc among young children in South Africa, are caused in large measure by the poor socio-economic conditions under which so many people have to live.

The vulnerability of children to bad sanitation, inadequate water supplies, poor nutrition and a disorganised household can be seen most clearly in the Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennal and Gangotti poliomyelitis, could have been incidence of gastro-enteritis. In South Africa it is the disease incastes and poliomyelitis, could have been most common cause of death in the 'coloured' (mixed prevented.

race) community and the second most common among Africans, with respective rates of 176 and 88 for every 1,00,000 people. The corresponding rate

for Whites is 4.

The migratory labour system that involves approximately two out of every five African men at work in the South African economy - has a devastating impact on family life.

Education

There are gross inequalities between Blacks and Whites in resources made available for education. In 1983-1984, the per capita expenditure by the state on African school pupils was less than one-sixth of the amount spent on White students.

Between 1970 and 1981 the level of unemployment in South Africa nearly doubled from 11.8 per cent to 21.1 per cent. The two groups which bear the brunt of unemployment are Black women, especially in the

rural areas, and Black school-leavers.

There is a need to ensure that school children are properly fed. While nutritional intervention strategies are more cost-effective if focussed on pre school children, it would be a mistake to ignore the crucial importance of ending the hunger which exists in the schools. There is an urgent need for school feeding schemes and until the state shoulders its responsibilities in this area, private initiatives are necessary.

Only 4.5 per cent of total health care expenditure goes towards preventive/promotive health. implications of this trend for Black children, whose first need is primary health care, are disturbing.

The difference between the health chances of Black and White children in South Africa is illustrated by their grossly unequal exposure to the destructive

effects of common childhood infections.

The diseases from which many Black children die are related directly to a hostile environment and many of these can be prevented by investments in social development or their severity reduced by adequate health services.

Epidemics of polio, measles and cholera have seriously affected Black South Africans in recent years and signify a breakdown of health services.

Vaccination coverage of Black children against measles has been deficient while the regularity of diarrhoeal diseases has recently been punctuated by yearly epidemics of cholera, which is now endemic.

Tuberculosis, a disease that flourishes in conditions of poverty such as overcrowding, malnutrition, frequent infections and stress, ravages hundreds of thousands of children. The social and economic distortions of apartheid have been unable to cope with the disease which has reached endemic proportions.

The suffering and death caused among Black babies by tetanus reflect a failure of effective tetanus toxoid immunisation programmes and lack of health care

for poor communities.

If currently available interventions for infectious diseases had been equitably applied throughout South Africa, over 80 per cent of deaths due to diarrhoeal

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Protein-energy malnutrition (PEM) is a major health problem in South Africa, especially among Black, coloured and Indian children. Chronic PEM affects between 28 per cent and 41 per cent of rural Black pre-school children and about 12 per cent those in urban areas.

Beginnings of a solution

Many of the difficulties facing children in South Africa cannot be properly resolved without fundamental political change. Political power for the poor, expressed through the democratic process in an undivided South Africa, is a necessary prerequisite for dealing effectively with such basic issues as the need for land reform or a radically different allocation of public expenditure through the national budget.

At the same time, within the present political context, there is space for work which would make: significant difference to the lives of children.

L C. Jain: Panchayats

(Contd. from page 5)

of the day. It was opposed 'vehemently by Centra Ministers on the ground that it would rob them of the only political leverage they have over the States This leverage is to tell the people at the election meetings that their State is not bothered about poverty removal. This line was promoted vod ferously by none other than Rajiv, Gandhi himself in his campaigns in 1985 and thereafter, for example in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.

The spate of panchayat conferences held in the past three months, the tone and tenor of Raji Gandhi's utterances and unwillingness to shed the Centre's excessive powers, all put together, confin that the Centre's main interest is not in the par chayats as such but in the propaganda value of appear ring to stand for the panchayats. (A rather clums example of partisan politics is that the 'status pape' on panchayats in different States' circulated at the aforesaid three conferences in 1989, showed village and taluka panchayats in Karnataka being 'under the control of administrators' as per the 1985 informa

tion available with the Centre!)

The Chief Ministers of West Bengal and Karna taka were quick to see the game and with good reason declined to support Bhajan Lal's astounding proposal of centrally-sponsored panchayati raj confe rences of eastern and southern regions at Calcutt and Bangalore without the participation of the respective State Governments. To expose the partisal political character of his proposal, the two Chie Ministers are reported ro have told Bhajan Lal the the State Governments were ready to fund and organise the conferences and to invite the Prim Minister and his colleagues. This counter-propost has at least for the present put a spanner in Central wheel, but what comfort is therein it for an one! If the love for the panchayats and the passion for poverty removal were even reasonably genuine, no a minute should have been lost in arriving all purposeful demarcation of roles between the mai development actors – the Centre, the States, the panchayats. (Courtesy: Indian Express)

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Socio-Economic Roots of Terrorism in Punjab

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The Punjab problem has dragged on so far without either a proper understanding of its nature or a solution in sight. In the meanwhile, lives are being lost everyday—some people get killed or injured by terrorists or robbers, and some by the police. Ageold and familial bonds between Hindus and Sikhs are being strained; thus the numerous families of Hindu girls married to Sikhs, and vice versa, are in danger of being disrupted. Sikhs tend to be alienated from the mainstream of national life—they are becoming suspect all over India.

Within Punjab, Emergency provisions (Art. 356) are in force; the bureaucracy, police and paramilitary forces are ruling, and there are widespread reports of false encounters and torture by the police. If democracy is a way of life, this way of life is being irreparably damaged. There is large scale disruption of business and industry. Many Hindu families have migrated from Punjab. The political leadership and the intellectuals have so far failed to diagnose the malady. A diagnosis is essential also in view of the possibility of the rise of similar situations in other parts of India.

While there is no doubt that the Government of Pakistan has been providing help to the terrorists, it would be a mistake to consider it to be the sole source of the problem; for, it cannot be denied that there is a hard core of extremists, consisting of hundreds of Sikh young men, who are active rather than passive agents. It is a pity that our rulers have been harping only on this theory of the involvement of foreign powers instead of examining the objective situation within the country which provides such a fertile ground for the covert intervention of these powers,

It is notable that while struggles in the name of Sikhs have been going on for six decades, extremism and terrorism arose only about a decade ago. An important socio-economic change preceding extremism was the rise of capitalist farming, caused mainly by the failure of land reforms and the success of the Green Revolution. While land reforms succeeded in Punjab in regard to consolidation of holdings, they failed with respect to both the imposition of a ceiling on holdings and tenancy rights. As the National Commission on Agriculture has noted: "These legislative measures were full of loopholes which were taken advantage of by the bigger landed interests to circumvent the laws. Besides, the implementation of these laws was extremely unsatisfactory. Ceilings were seriously evaded. In anticipation of ceilings, the big land holders resorted to partitioning, of their holding holdings and fictitiously transferring them in pieces to other individuals through what is called 'benami' transfer transfers on a very large scale, with the result that

The author is a Professor of Public Administration, Panjab University, Chandigarh. the State Government could secure very little surplus land for distribution among the poor."2

As regards tenancy, the unfortunate fact is that sharecroppers were not treated as tenants in Punjab, as well as in several other States: "the exclusion of sharecroppers from the scope of tenancy legislation deprives of millions real tillers of the soil of the protection and rights provided for tenants under tenancy reforms measures".3 "Secondly," says the Commission, "ejectment of tenants from their holdings is still permissible on many grounds and this is essentially a continuing hangover of feudal tenancies."4 In its opinion, "there is no reason why tenancy should be terminated" on the grounds of failure to execute an agreement and to cultivate in the manner and extent customary, as is permissible in Punjab. Thirdly, "provisions regarding 'voluntary surrenders' have become the biggest instrument in the hands of the landowners to deprive tenants of their due protection. The so-called 'voluntary surrenders' are hardly ever voluntary... There are no provisions for the regulation of surrenders in Punjab, as in some other States."5

The fourth major provision "which has worked to the detriment of the potential beneficiaries of tenancy legislation is the law regarding resumption of land by landowners".6 Landowners were allowed to resume land upto the ceiling limit in Punjab, in contrast to UP and West Bengal where they were not permitted to resume any tenanted land. Resumption of land has been sought to be justified on the ground of personal cultivation by the landowner; however, the term 'personal cultivation' has been so defined as to cover cultivation through hired labour. Fifthly, tenancy legislation has not been able to regulate rent as recommended in the Five Year Plans, that is, at one-fifth to one-fourth of the gross produce. In Punjab, fair rent is fixed at one-third of the produce.7 Finally, land records are manipulated; thus, landowners do not issue rent receipts and rotate tenancies from plot to plot, so that the tenant cannot prove continuous occupation of his holding and loses the right of occupancy.

The Green Revolution resulted from the introduction of new technology in agriculture. This required higher investment by the farmer. While big farmers started making large profits, small and marginal farmers suffered. Loans were not easily available to them — they had to pay high rates of interest to private money lenders and bribes to government officials. The inputs became costlier everyday and were sometimes adulterated, defective or spurious. Thus even certified seed was sometimes poor in quality (mainly due to the corruption of seed inspectors) and weevilled. Above all, the crops had to be sold at unremunerative prices. The result has been impoverishment of small and marginal farmers. Bhalla and Chadha, in their

vating between 2.5 and five acres) ran into an average debt of Rs 795 per year, and a marginal farmer (upto 2.5 acres) of Rs 700 per year.9 Many of them were apparently forced to sell or mortgage their lands to big farmers and join the ranks of landless labour. According to the All-India Rural Labour Enquiry, labour households in Punjab and Haryana increased by 33 per cent between 1964-65

and 1974-75. The net result of the twin factors of the nonimplementation of land reforms and the introduction of new technology, has thus been the rise of the big capitalist farmer. Bhalla and Chadha found that in 1975-76, big farmers, who constituted 4.4 per cent of the sample of rural households, had farms of an average size of 32.8 acres, while marginal ones, numbering 8.4 per cent, had those of 1.6 acres: thus the large farms were, on an average, more than twenty times the size of the smallest ones.10 | The inequalities, however, could not be justified on the ground of higher productivity of large farms - the annual agricultural income from each acre of land in the case of the large farm was Rs 740.00, while that from the smallest farm was Rs 754.50. While the whole family of the marginal farmer worked on the land, the big farmer functioned through employed labour, and yet earned twenty times what the marginal one did. The small farmer had to supplement his income through means such as dairy and poultry farming. Hence, while the implementation of land reforms would not lower agricultural production, it would lead to increased production of dairy and poultry products.

The recognition of the increasing indebtedness and pauperisation of small and marginal farmers is likely to shock the elite, in whose consciousness the Green Revolution is a panacea for agrarian problems. Hence reference to this serious problem is avoided, as if it involved baring our nakedness. However, the fact is that the problem is wider it concerns big farmers also. If on the one hand, new technology has led to greater agricultural productivity, on the other hand it tends to be partly neutralised by the adverse terms of trade with industry. Thus the products of agriculture, such as wheat, rice, sugarcane, cotton and oilseeds, constitute the input of industry, either as staple food for workers or as raw material.

Similarly, the products of industry, such as fertiliser, pump sets, tractors, pesticides and processed seed, constitute the input of agriculture. Now, since the prices of industrial commodities have been rising faster than those of agricultural ones, farmers suffer. Spokesmen of farmers, like the late M.S. Randhawa and Sharad Joshi, have been crying hoarse about this for quite sometime.

This economic problem, which deeply concerns the farmers, necessarily has its repercussions in politics. The Government may be expected to maintain the balance among various interests. However, supported as the Central leadership is mainly by big industry and trade, it imposes greater restrictions on farmers: thus the system of food zones prevents the Punjab

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGangotting wheat to areas of scarcity survey in 1975-76, found that a small farmer (culti- farmers from exporting wheat to areas of scarcity leading to low prices. Hence the farmer is forced to sell his produce at the support price, which also

is fixed by the Central Government.

This is the genesis of the demand for State autonomy: the farmers of Punjab would like the support price to be fixed by the State leadership, dependent as it would be upon their financial and political backing. Further, while the Central Government puts restrictions on farmers, it is seen to do little to maintain prices of industrial commodities. Thus the prices of fertilisers and tractors in India have been above their world prices; prices of consumer goods produced by industry have also been rising fast Spurious and adulterated fertilisers and pesticides have brought about the ruin of many a farmer, Industrial commodities have to be mainly imported by Punjab: the lack of large scale industry in Punjab. even in the public sector, is seen to be the result of stepmotherly treatment by the Central Government. Insofar as Punjab has been forced to export primary products such as wheat, rice, cotton and oilseeds to the rest of India, often at low prices, and to import finished products at high prices, there may be said to be shades of colonial exploitation of Punjab, and particularly of its farmers.

Within the society of Punjab, as in other societies, the exploitation of poor peasants at the hands of princes, landlords, the bureaucracy, money lenders, and traders, is an ageold story. Such exploitation has cultural overtones also. Thus those living in urban areas have always looked down upon rural folk. In Punjab, as it happens, the majority of the population in the rural areas is Sikh, while the majority in urban areas is Hindu. Hence Sikhs came to be equated with rustics: Hindus made fun of Sikhs as being feeble-minded for decades. Many Sikhs have taken the jokes sportingly; however, such widespread and constant humiliation of a whole religious community has certainly been inexcusable. The humiliation has, in reality, been symbolic of the low status of the peasantry to which

most Sikhs have belonged.

The Sikhs have suffered from all the handicaps to which rural folk have been subject. Comparative lack of English education has hindered them from entering the bureaucracy, particularly at higher levels While the peasant was mostly a Sikh, the blood sucking money lender, the trader and the industrialist was often a Hindu. Given the fact that Hindus made no attempt to hide their contempt for the "idiocy of Sikhs, it is hardly surprising that Sikhs came to feel that they were discriminated against. It can also not be denied that most members of interview boards and selection committees for jobs in government and business were Hindus, and even if they tended only to prefer persons of their family, caste and class Sikhs with equal merit were generally likely to be lell out in comparison with Hindus.

There is no doubt that there has also been a conflict between poor Sikh peasants and Sikh landlords now converted into capitalist farmers. Poor farmers often have to take the rich farmer's tractor or other implements on rent, or have to obtain loans from them. The marginal farmer may have sometimes to

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of the Sikh landless labourers belong to Scheduled Castes, are known as mazhabis, and have a low social status. These relationships necessarily involve exploitation of the poor by the rich peasant. This has recently been forcefully brought out by the struggle of labouring Sikhs in the Tarn Taran and Patti areas of Amritsar district against the efforts of rich farmers, backed by Sikh fundamentalist terrorists, to push down harvesting wages. Some of the struggling workers have been killed by the terrorists.11

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While the poor peasant has generally tended to be reconciled to his fate, the new capitalist farmer, who has been losing lakhs of rupees due to the adverse terms of trade, has fought back. Having found that donations to political parties would not protect his interests (against the clout of the capital owning bourgeois), he got mercenaries and religious fanatics to fight on his behalf. The poor peasant, whose class interests were partly in conflict, was also motivated to fight in the name of religion. Hence the call went out in the Anandpur Sahib Resolution of 1973 that the Sikh identity was in danger, and the threat given that unless amends were made, Sikhs would fight for a homeland, namely Khalistan, in which they would be able to maintain the glory of the Sikh community.

THE Anandpur Sahib Resolution of October 1978, adopted by the All-India Akali Conference, and declared repeatedly by the Sikh Forum and Sikhs in general to be the only authentic Resolution, does not, however, make any mention of Khalistan. 12 It consists of twelve resolutions. They are as follows.

Resolution No. 1 demands "State autonomy in keeping with the concept of federalism". Resolution No. 2 demands transfer of Chandigarh and Punjabi speaking areas to Punjab, control of canal head works by Punjab, just distribution of Ravi and Beas waters, and amendment of the land ceiling law in UP. Resolution No. 3 stresses the need "to break the monopolistic hold of the capitalists on the Indian economy by the 30 years of Congress rule in India"; it demands parity between the prices of agricultural and industrial produce, remunerative prices for cash crops, rapid industrialisation of the State, unemployment allowance, and perceptible reduction in the prices of farm machinery and inputs. Resolution No. 4 demands that Punjabi should be given the status of the second language in the neighbouring States of Punjab. Resolution No. 5 demands early settlement of the claims of refugees in Jammu and Kashmir. Resolution No. 6 demands that proper representation should be given to Sikhs in government samuels the second should be given to Sikhs in government samuels the second seco ment services, local bodies and State legislatures, through no. 7 through nominations, if need be. Resolution No. 7 as to bring down their price. Resolution No. 8 demands improve their price. demands improvement in the economic lot of the labouring class through amendment of the Minimum Wages Act lass through amendment of the Minimum Wages Act, etc. Resolution No. 9 demands a broadcasting station in the Golden Temple, Amritsar.
Resolution of agricultural Resolution No. 10 demands exemption of agricultural

work for wages on the land of the rich farmer. Many lands from wealth tax and estate duty, and inheriin-law, instead of the father's. Resolution No. 11 demands "no discrimination" between Sikh and Hindu Harijans in any part of India, and budget allocation for their welfare in proportion to their population. Resolution No. 12 demands the immediate establishment of six sugar and four textile mills

It is notable that most of the demands contained in the Anandpur Sahib Resolution are economic and are aimed at furthering the interests of farmers, particularly the big ones. For, it is the rich farmer and not the poor one who would gain by the amendment to the land ceiling law, reduction in the prices of farm machinery, abolition of wealth tax and estate duty and changes in the law of inheritance. It is mainly the rich who would gain from the expansion of credit facilities for medium industries, as demanded in Resolution No. 3. Compensation to refugees, nomination to government service, local bodies, and State legislatures, and payment of unemployment allowance, all concern the rich; thus unemployment allowance could relate only to the educated unemployed, for who would pay unemployment allowance to agricultural wage workers constituting more than 38 per cent of the male workers engaged in agriculture?

It was after the non-fulfilment of the demands in the above Resolution that terrorism arose in Punjab. The terrorists have been using sophisticated weapons and many of them have apparently been well trained. The cost of the armanents and training could have been borne only by rich farmers. While foreign powers might be providing help, the foci of preparation and action for terrorism within India could only be the rich farmers. The situation has certainly been complicated by various other factors. If on the one hand, a communal garb was given to the extremist movement by its leaders to obtain the support of poor Sikh peasants, on the other hand, the Congress-I leadership also aided and abetted the terrorists. If innocent Nirankaris, Hindus and Sikhs were killed by the terrorists in Punjab, thousands of innocent Sikhs were mercilessly butchered, and even burnt alive, apparently by mercenaries hired with funds provided by the capital owning bourgeoisie and with the connivance of politicians and the police, at Delhi and other places in November 1984.

The patently communal campaign of the Congress-I in the general elections of December 1984 did succeed in getting it overwhelming support in the northern Hindi-Hindu belt. Thus, paradoxically, the interests of both the clashing parties demand that the Punjab problem be seen as basically a communal one: the big farmers gain by getting the support of the poor Sikh, and the capital owning bourgeoisie gains if its nominees are seen as the protectors of Hindus. Both sides constantly use the media to give the problem a communal colour.

However, all the evidence is against them: there has not been a single riot between Hindus and Sikhs in Punjab, Hindus continue to pray at gurdwaras

(Continued on page 22)

India's Security Parameters

SAHDEV VOHRA

THE security aims of India today are obviously different from those of the British rulers. India believes in non-alignment and not power blocs, whereas the British had to protect their imperial interests. But the creation of Pakistan altered the geo-political situation. The British preoccupation with the Russian threat to India has been inherited by Pakistan because Pakistan occupied that portion of the State of Jammu & Kashmir in 1947 which contains all the routes from Central Asia Afghanistan into the subcontinent. In the Pak-occupied areas of Hunza, Gilgit, Chitral and Baltisan enter all the routes over the Karakoram mountains from the Pamir region of Russia and the Sarikol region of Chinese Turkestan. The routes over the Hindukush from Afghanistan also debouch into this Pak-occupied area. On the other hand, the British did not anticipate any trouble from China because of her weakness whereas India has to establish goodneighbourly relations with a resurgent China.

The area of the State of Jammu & Kashmir continues to occupy a pivotal position and China has made friendship with Pakistan a cardinal feature of its policy because Pakistan commands most of the routes over the Karakoram and the Hindukush mountains into Russia, China and Afghanistan. The importance of Jammu & Kashmir to India is because of the routes into India from China over the Karakoram Pass, and across Aksai Chin, besides the routes into Tibet proper. Then again the creation of a buffer between the Trans-Karakoram area extending up to the Kun Lun mountains is a policy aim of China and Pakistan. Hence the importance of Siachen glacier and of the Shaksgam valley to its east

ceded to China by Pakistan.

The State of Jammu & Kashmir represents a security area for India from its geo-political position so long as there is a potential threat from the north. Hence the first Indian aim must be to secure a peaceful settlement with China and Pakistan over Aksai Chin and the Pak-occupied areas of the State. The establishment of security here thus requires not only India's relations with Pakistan and China being friendly, it involves also the establishment of such friendly relations between Russia and Afghanistan, and China and Pakistan.

India and China have also to assure each other of their peaceful role on another area, namely, the Tibet region of China. Tibet was accepted by India as a part of China in 1950. Yet it continued to be a source of distrust between the two countries. India is apprehensive of the militarisation of Tibet, particularly the atomic launching sites. In 1907, Russia and England made a detente over non-interference in Tibet, so now Tibet acts as a buffer between

The author is a retired member of the Indian Civil Service.

India and China. The aims of India, Tibet and China are, however, common, that is, the establishment of a completely autonomous region which is an integral part of China. Tibetans have a feeling of resentment not only with regard to the despolation of their religious institutions but also over the settlement of Hans and the decimation of the Tibetan population. Whatever the correct situation may be, it is a hopeful sign that the Dalai Lama has called for a demilitarised, autonomous Tibet as a part of China.

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The interference of power blocs in the affairs of South Asia has acted as a source of conflict, instead of being an influence for peace. The three wars between India and Pakistan over Kashmir, at any rate those in 1965 and 1971, would not have taken place but for superpower interference and rivalry. This rivalry has created another tension zone where India's security needs to be safeguarded, namely, the Indian Ocean. Both the USA and the USSR have established bases within and along the littoral regions of the Indian Ocean. Here the call for demilitarsation is as urgent as in the case of Kashmir and Tibet. Unfortunately, the impulses for peace are weak and defeated by distrust, and the vested interests of the war industries. The security aims of India and her neighbours do not require more armaments, but more trustful leadership.

Once Pakistan and India agree to a friendly base for their relationship, the policy aims of Pakistan will also undergo change. If the Persian Gulf is likened to a village pond, the countries around it would also be seen to include the present-day Pakistan, which is a replica of the civilisation of Harappa of the ancient days. Its prosperity and economic interests will flourish by such a western orientation. In addition to being a member of SAARC, Pakistan would serve its interests by being a member of the Gulf community as well. The future of Pakistan will be brighter because of its membership of both SAARC and the Gulf regional body.

Security aims are two sides of the same coin. For you can make them distrustful and warlike, or you can make them trustful and peacelike. No doubt the problems of Kashmir, of the border with China, and of the Indian Ocean are not capable of instant solution. But so long as there is confidence in each, solutions can and must be found through negotiations.

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Bihar: Is there a Way Out? SHISHIR SANDIPAN

BIHAR, to a non-Bihari, seems to be a land of mercenary power brokers, dagger-wielding examinees and corrupt officials. It is a land where nothing is impossible if there is enough money and muscle power at hand. At best, a Bihari is a Mungerilal engaged in rejoicing in his Hasin Sapne. The reality is not much divorced from the one being projected by the media and the academicians. Broadly speaking, there are two sets of studies done for Bihar: one explaining its economic backwardness, and the other, explaining the day-to-day violence and corruption. Our purpose here is to integrate both sets of studies because, we feel, the infrastructure determines the super-structure and the latter, in its turn, limits the development of the former. So, what emerges finally is a "vicious circle" of backwardness. The task, therefore, is to break this vicious circle.

The issues relating to Bihar's economic backwardness are genuine enough. The widening gap between Bihar and other States of India is most dramatically illustrated by the statistics on per capita income. In 1949-50, the per capita income of the richest State was 80 per cent higher than the per capita income of Bihar. In 1984-85 it was 190 per cent higher. Many attempts have been made to explain this backwardness. According to P.H. Prasad, the decline of Bihar began during the British rule itself. Arvind N. Das considers lack of feeling of regionalism as a cause of this backwardness.

It may be pointed out that in a developing country, more often than not, the demand for economic goods exceeds the supply of it. In a democratic federal set-up it is the wisdom of the Centre that matters in order to balance this mismatch between demand and supply. More important than this, Bihar has been very low since independence inspite of the fact that this State has produced leaders of national calibre and has a rich store of natural resources. This is a paradox and we make an effort to explain this.

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After independence land reform measures were to be carried out in all States. In Bihar they could not be carried out efficiently due to stiff opposition by the landed aristocracy which was at the political helm of affairs as well. It is interesting to note that Bihar deal. Bihar declared no extra amount of land to be distri-buted area of the skewed buted among the poor people. Therefore, the skewed distributions the poor people. distribution of land continued. And in predominantly again, of land with an nantly agrarian Bihar the possession of land with an individual. individual determined his bargaining power. Consequently quently, on one hand, there existed a landed aristocracy with a high bargaining power and capturing

The author is a Research Scholar in the Department of Allahabad. Economics, University

almost all positions of importance, and, on the other, a large chunk of the population with negligible say in the affairs of Bihar; the former exploiting the latter.

In course of time another dimension has been added to this scene. As pointed out earlier, the demand for economic goods exceeds the supply of it and, therefore, people first try to purchase favour (the point where corruption creeps in) and then get hold of the goods. This act of "purchasing favour" has led to the emergence of middlemen who acted as power brokers and became rich in no time. Thus, Bihar's society is stratified into three broad categories cutting across the caste divide: the landed aristocracy, the nouveau riche and the landless masses.

It is important to point out that the old feudal structure is collapsing no doubt, but the power structure, by and large, remains the same. As Bihar gets enmeshed in encapsulating capitalism, the value of money has increased tremendously. Moreover, the value of money gets augmented by that of muscle power. The phenomenon of rangdari tax is unique to this State. A rangdar is one who demands dominance. This class of nouveau riche or the rangdars has replaced and/or-joined hands with the landed aristocracy and weilds power on the masses. What we see is the conspiracy of a few against the masses. Both the classes joining together act as the insulator between the people and the government, and therefore, the best of government plans (even if they are rare) are not able to reach the grassroots level. Thus, the social system generated by the economic system limits the extent of any positive change which might take place in the latter—the vicious circle is complete.

What is needed is to break this vicious circle. The masses ought to fight the few. They need to ensure a victory for themselves. This victory is vital, no matter how long it taxes. It is this victory that will lead to an increase in the bargaining power of the masses vis-a-vis the few and consequently of Bihar vis-a-vis the Centre. However, one of the disturbing facts is that the economic backwardness of the masses has weakened their psychic power as well. The marginal man does not fight the atrocities done by the conspirators. He considers it safe to move to some other place in order to earn his livelihood (witness the fight of labourers from Bihar). Those who remain, consider it safe to use words like huzurs and sarkars for the conspirators. Those happenings are painful but inevitable as well.

However, there is a ray of hope from certain quarters in Bihar. Determined efforts are being made by groups like the Naxalites, the Indian People's Front (IPF) and more recently the Bihar Vikas Manch to educate the landless poor of the reality. Unfortunately, all previous attempts have tended to become bloody in nature and consequently get divorced from the real cause. Nevertheless, life in these quarters (especially the Jehanabad region) is changing in an undramatic but significant manner. The impact of these changes is to create a situation which is highly volatile. The killings in the State are not only a reflection of petty caste

(Continued on page 18)

Centre-State Relations: Prospect and Retrospect

SUMITRA KUMAR JAIN

THE report on Centre-State relations by the Sarkaria Commission is being discussed by Parliament in the midst of the many questions raised by the Opposition ruled States in the sphere of the Centre-State relations. As a matter of fact the Sarkaria Commission report was submitted to the Government almost a year ago, but somehow the Government avoided placing it before Parliament for full discussion. The motive behind this is best known to the Government, but one thing has become clear that the delay cannot defuse the matter in the fast changing political climate of our federal polity.

The Sarkaria Commission has undoubtedly performed a rigorous task by going into the details of the problem of Centre-State relations by consulting various State Governments and the political parties it has come out with its two volume recommenda-The Commission has given many suggestions for improvements in the working of our Centre-State relations. There is no doubt that some of its recommendations are very useful, whereas on some other there can be differences of opinion. Our able parliamentarians must look into this with utmost intelli-

gence as well as vigilance. But this is perhaps also the appropriate time for us to know that why today Centre-State relations have become the focal point of debate, whereas in the early period of independence to the late sixties, this was almost an insignificant issue. A careful observation of the functioning of our federal polity reveals that in the initial 17 years of independence the centre as well as all the States were ruled by Governments formed by the Congress party. Therefore any dispute between the Centre and the State invariably used to be settled across the table at the party level and these issues never came in the form of Centre-State problems. This was mainly possible because of the outstanding personality and leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru.

However, soon after the departure of Nehru from the scene, the trends towards localism became more and more manifest. The choice of Lal Bahadur Shastri as Nehru's successor brought out the linkage between the two levels of Congress politics at the Centre and in the States. The State leaders provided the principle forum for lobbying in favour of Shastri's candidature. By now the State units of party had become enormously powerful and the State bosses were inclined to exercise the requisite pressure on decision-making in Congress politics.

Again, in the succession of Mrs Gandhi after the

The author is a Lecturer in Aurobindo College, University of Delhi and a Ph.D. scholar in the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. present article is written in the context of the ongoing discussions on the Sarkaria Commission report on Centre-State relations in the Lok Sabha.

death of Shastri, a political complication arose and the issue was settled in a way that involved fresh accretion of strength for the States. The powerful support for Mrs Gandhi's candidature came from the State Chief Ministers inspite of the lack of enthusiasm on the part of the Syndicate. All this revealed in clear terms the magnitude of regional resul

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pressure on federal politics.

However, by now one could notice that the Indian federalism started experiencing severe strains, especially in Centre-State relations, which was almost non existent during the first generation of Indian federalism (1950-66). During the second generation, after the exit of Nehru and Shastri from the Indian political scene, the rise of a powerful leader of the ruling Congress party, Indira Gandhi, and the emergence of dissent inside the party led to a greater emphasis on centralisation and regimentation within the party and thereby the federal system as well. At the same time, however, economic development had helped to produce a new political elite, elite from rural areas who benefited from the Green Revolution of the 1960s. This new elite challenged the professional and industrial elite who had controlled for long the Congress party, the national Government and many State Governments. And feeling frustrated in their abortive efforts to significantly influence the national Government's economic policy, these new elites formulated demands that called for decentralisation, greater State autonomy, and more tolerance for State-based Opposition parties.

The fourth general elections in 1967 were a water shed in Indian politics. These affected considerably the working of our federal polity, and more prominently, the Congress party as such. The consensus of the Congress party was disturbed. The internal competition within the party was reflected in open defiance, dissidence and electoral sabotage in several The phenomenon of defection eroded the Congress strength and image. At the same time, the Opposition parties began to be polarised between an articulate Right and an articulate Left. All this led to the crumbling of the monolithic Congress structure. The Congress party suffered a big loss by being voted out of power in many States for the first time. This was due to the increasing centralisation within the Congress party and with the rising support base of the Opposition parties and their emergence as the contender for power in several States on the plank of anti-Congression Until the fourth general elections the Congress could maintain its dominance by preserving minimal harmony among many potentially contradictory interests. But after the elections it could not continue perform its traditional function of moderating and naturalising factional split within the party this resulted in near disintegration of the Congress organisation in many of the States. Hence,

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result of the 1967 elections marked the beginning THE collapse of the Janata party, due to its infightof the transformation of the Indian political system and both the Congress and India had reached a new and both the congress party it was a loss of its hegemony while the Indian political system adjusted to a shift from one party dominance to multi-partyism. A new political environment of Indian federalism was thus created.

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By the time the 1971 mid-term elections result came, the political instability of Mrs. Gandhi's Congress converted into a stable and unquestioned leadership for the nation as well as the party. The thumping victory of Mrs. Gandhi augmented her authority on government in clear terms. All this led to concentration of power in her hands. By now the State Governments were almost subordinated to New Delhi, a political era of intensified Centralism appeared on the national scene. Added to this the proclamation of national Emergency in June 1975 had a considerable impact on the federal structure of India. The 38th and 42nd amendments passed during this period placed the executive beyond indicial review, leaving enough scope for Central intervention by the Congress party in the former case, and the 42nd amendment enlarged the scope of Emergency further enabling proclamation of emergency in a State even when there is no breakdown of the Constitutional machinery. The restructuring of the Seventh Schedule by empowering the Centre to deploy its armed forces and transfering education and forest from the State to the concurrent list affected the harmonious federal balance causing further erosion of State autonomy. This political climate enabled Mrs Gandhi to emerge as the chief spokesman of the superior claims of unitarism over federalism in the political scenario of India.

However, the 1977 general elections which brought the historical change in Indian politics, catapulted for the first time the Janata party to power by replacing the Congress. With specific regard to Centre-State relations, it appeared that the Janata party would be able to remove all the anomalies which had disturbed and strained Centre-State relations during the Congress regime. No doubt those favouring state autonomy were once again in a position to put for-Ward claims on behalf of devolution, decentralisation and increased democracy which were kept on leash for a long time. But in reality nothing positive took place. The attitude of then Prime Minister, Morarji Desai, shattered all hopes of the of pro changers of Centra Current when he Centre-State relations and State autonomy, when he declared on behalf of the Janata party, on a comprehensive proposal for federal reform placed on the national agenda by the West Bengal Government, that any conference for State autonomy was unnecessary since sary since the present constitutional provisions were adequate. This stand of the Government showed the dominate. dominance of the erstwhile Congress (Organisation) and Jana C. The only conand Jana Sangh in the Janata party. The only contribution tribution of the Janata party in this regard was the imaginary. States or State imaginary talk of more power to States or State autonomy.

the old Congress to return with the new slogan: vote for the Government that works. The 1980 mid-term poll made Mrs Gandhi all in all for the party and the Government. Her old style of operation continued even in the new political situation inspite of the taste of change by the electorate of this country. Mrs Gandhi perhaps could not grasp this situation with all that seriousness, which she should have. Thus by now with her centralised personality and inconsistent handling of the various States and its leaders, the heterogeneity of the region began to assert itself. The units of the Congress party in many States thus had reduced themselves to the point, where they resembled regional parties more than extension of the national organisation. The party became incapable of serving as the polity's central integrating institution. It no longer maintained a steady flow of patronage, information and pressure between different levels in the system. Its transactional links to many key groups at the grassroots were severed. Therefore, all this contributed to the emergence of various regional political parties on the political scene of the country. The emergence of the Telugu Desam as a victorious regional party in AP in 1982 set the pace for various other non-Congress parties to capture the power at the State level. The coming in power of various Opposition parties in Karnataka, Assam, Sikkim, West Bengal, Kerala, J & K, Punjab, Haryana, Tamil Nadu significantly altered the balance in favour of the States.

However, the sudden demise of Mrs Gandhi and ascendance of Rajiv Gandhi after the unprecedented victory in the Lok Sabha poll in 1984, signalled a return to the earlier politics of conciliation and consensus, when the new Prime Minister announced his commitment to the essential values of democratic politics in his address to the Congress centenary session in December 1985. Initially, the new Prime Minister allowed a variety of opinions to support on the major national issues and insisted on carrying the Opposition parties with him. Some of the critical problems were amicably solved, and the Punjab and Assam accords could be concluded. Elections were held in Punjab and Akali Dal (L) defeated the Congress-I and formed the Government in the State. Besides, he did not try to destabilise the non-Congress-I State Governments and refrained from misusing Article 356 and tried to create goodwill in the sphere of Centre-State relations. All this brightened Centre-State relations and the second generation strains started declining.

But soon Rajiv Gandhi's politics started polarising the regional forces. Besides the assertion of regional autonomy, there began an emergence of regional elites who tried to avail the available opportunities to strengthen their position to bargain in the newlycreated political atmosphere. This whole situation brought changes in Rajiv Gandhi's earlier policy and now his initial thrust towards a new political orientation began to fade out. On the other hand, a fillip was given to the political-culture practiced in Mrs Gandhi's period. Regular elections have not been held in the Congress for the last Digitizen by Any Samon Foundation Committee and Econome-State relations in the last few Rajiv Gandhi's increasing intolerance for dissent and his longing for personal dominance in the party organisation, have led to the revival of earlier practice of running the party through nominations. State Congress-I chiefs (recently in Bihar) are being replaced through nominations and several of Rajiv Gandhi's ministerial colleagues of the Centre have been given the dual role of the State Party President. The Chief Ministers in several Congress-I ruled States have been named in the national capital. (The cases of Bhagwat Jha Azad, Moti Lal Vohra, N.D. Tiwari, S.N. Sinha are well known. This has served to aggravate the dissidents' activity in the organisation. This only indicates the failure of Rajiv Gandhi to vitalise the party. With the increasing erosion of Rajiv Gandhi's credibility both as a leader of the nation and as a vote mobiliser for the ruling party, the initial direction, which he gave to the Centre-State relations seems to have been lost. The second generation strains have reappeared and recent events show a drift towards confrontation.

What are the prospects for the future with regard to the federal polity? This is difficult to say in the light of the unpredicatble mood of Indian electorate. In the past the subject had been discussed, debated by academician journalists, jurists, constitutionalistson different occasions. The voluminous work of the Sarkaria Commission too is lying in the custody of Government for the last one year, which now the Government decided to place before Parliament only to discuss it. How long its implementation will take is anybody's guess. The Sarkaria Commission has too not talked of any drastic changes in the existing Centre-State relations. It says: "The working of the Constitution in the last 37 years has demonstrated that its fundamental scheme and provision have with stood reasonably well the inevitable stresses and strains of the movement of a heterogenous society towards its development goal. The Constitution has been amended number of times to adjust its working to the changes in the environment. In our view it is neither advisable nor necessary to make any drastic change in the basic character of the Constitution." The report further says, "There is certainly scope for improvement and reform in number of aspects. The actual working of the constitution leaves much to be desired.

This observation of the Sarkaria Commission makes it clear that our Constitution is perfect and whatever discrepancies have emerged it is due to mishandling of the people manning the institutions. There is no doubt that there would be divergent opinion on such observations and the overall report of Sarkaria Commission, due to the varied complexion, nature, support base and interests of the various political parties.

There is no doubt that Centre-State relations have deteriorated in the recent years due to the change in the political situation of the country. But those who see this problem in the light of the constitutional and institutional arrangements are perhaps missing the vital point that the genesis of the problem lies not in the letters but the proper implementation of the Constitution. What has really contributed in the

years is the growing apathy of the States towards the centre due to over-centralisation. Though one cannot deny the need for a strong Centre in a developing country like India, but an attempt to build a strong Centre on the foundation of a weak state, would be an attempt to build a strong building on the foundation of sands. Moreover, a strong centre does not lie in the width of assorted powers, but in the depth and efficiency in the chosen fields necessary to maintain the unity and integrity of the country. In this context, strength means the ability to perform adequately and properly the duty assigned to each by the Constitution.

Finally the future prospect of smooth Centre-State relations will largely depend on the political leadership to develop a healthy federalism to meet the growing aspirations of different regions within the unity framework of the country. To achieve this the attempt should be to restore the feeling of mutual trust among the different States and the Centre. Regional imbalances and uneven growth due to the partisan role of the Centre have to be removed by fair play on the part of the Central Government.

But on the whole, the pertinent point to be remembered by all the political parties, ruling and Opposition, is that neither the Centre nor the States are sovereign. Sovereignty vests in the people, the whole, people, the nation. Therefore, it is not negotiable, not divisible and not distributable. Hence, what the Centre and the State can share is only the execution of the people's sovereign will. The process of Government can be shared, but the governance in every case has to be for the good of the whole people.

Sandipan: Bihar

(Contd. from page 15)

politics but have something to do with the skewed distribution of assets in the State. If nothing is done to reverse the trend, violence might erupt on a large scale in Bihar. The marginal man may achieve something but the cost would be very high.

We have yet to see things from Dr. Jagannath Mishra. However, great hope is being reposed on him. We do not know if Dr Mishra would live upto the general expectations. It is clear, nevertheless, that Bihar needs a man embedded in moral values and oriented towards the cause of Bibar far removed from the petty power politics in the State. This is

a hard bargain, but then, not impossible.

All told what emerges is that the vicious circle of backwardness can be broken by two forces: one, the parties launching genuine mass movements and the other a moral personality. The importance attached to the former is very high and the probability of the latter isbleak. "The heart of India," to use John Houlton's words, "bleeds." "In Bihar violence has become the generalised mode of social intercourse, the words of Arvind N. Das. Arun Sinha says "the major feature of social as well as political life is the prevalence of the language of force, arms in particular." For this sorry state of affairs, Biharis are themselves to be blamed no doubt, but the Centre is no less responsible.

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This is a paper presented by the author, General Secretary of the Communist Party of India-Marxist, at a meeting held under the aegis of the Krishna Menon Society in New Delhi on March 27, 1989. It is being published have to stimulate a discussion on the subject. - Editor

Indian Nationalism and World Socialism

E.M.S. NAMBOODIRIPAD

THE Great October Revolution in Russia was a world historic development. It marked the beginning of that transition from capitalism to socialism whose inevitability was substantiated by Marx and Engels in their voluminous writings.

It was, however, not this aspect that struck the. Indian nationalist leaders and intellectuals. They saw in the Russian Revolution the fact that despotism or autocracy has been overthrown in one of the most powerful imperialist countries. This offered in their eyes an inspiring model for India's freedom fighters to follow, since the British Empire too can be uprooted if the Indian people unite. Outstanding political leaders like Lokmanya Tilak and towering intellectuals like poet Tagore hailed the new Russia. This has since then been a continuing trend in our national movement.

In the post-independence years, this trend found its renewed and developed expression in the foreign policy of peace, non-alignment and cooperation with socialist countries. Originally formulated by the first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, it was continued by all the subsequent Prime Ministers. Today, under Rajiv Gandhi, it is one of the most significant features of the world situation since it is an integral part of the 100 odd-nations' non-aligned movement.

Parallel to this was another important, though telatively much weaker, trend. I am referring to the large number of militant nationalists who had earlier been known for their faith in and practice of individual terrorism but were slowly being converted by the cult of revolutionary mass action headed by the working class.

The final years of the second decade and the early years of the next decade of this century saw the emergence of a large number of new revolutionary groups (calling themselves Communists) scatthem branch entire country. A small section of them braved the rigours of a trek along the Himalayas and reached "the holy land of the new socialist Coming into contact with the leaders of the Soviet State and of the Communist International (including Lenin himself), they formed in October 1920 the first initial organisation under the name the Communist Party of India.

Congress versus Communists

Aithough formed out of Indian emigres who, for time-heimed out of Indian emigres with the the time-being were not in physical contact with the MAINSTREAM April 8, 1989

mother country, this organisation became the link between the scattered groups of Communists back home and the leadership of the Communist International in Moscow. It was the work of this Committee and the activities of the scattered groups of Communists in India itself, that culminated in the first open conference of Indian Communists held at Kanpur in 1925 and the formation of the openly functioning Communist Party of India.

Ever since then, down to the present day, freedom fighters representing the two trends have been cooperating with each other and at the same time fighting on the issue of how best to carry the freedom struggle forward. After the attainment of independence, they fought on how to consolidate the freedom won and proceed to build a modern democratic and prosperous India. For over four decades by now, the relation between the two organisations representing the two trends - the ruling Congress and the Opposition Communist Party, have been of occasional cooperation, but by and large of bitter

It is not proposed here to go into the history of this combination of cooperation and struggle between the two trends and how, in the process, the Communist movement as the representative of India's working class has become the main challenge for the party of the Indian bourgeoisie, the Congress. What is proposed on the other hand is to explain where the two stand today on a number of theoretical and practical issues which are of topical importance.

Socialism in World History

The first of these issues concerns the understanding of those who represent the two trends on the role of socialism in world history. There is indeed a deep gulf which separates the two trends on this. At the same time, there is a certain measure of convergence also.

Subscribing as they do to the Marxist-Leninist theory of humanity's transition from capitalism to socialism and then to communism, the Communists see in the 72 year world history since the October Revolution the confirmation of the Marxist-Leninist theory. The first land of socialism became a model for all the backward countries including India by showing that it is socialist construction that helps the rapid overcoming of all-round backwardness. It also inspired the working class and other revolu-tionary forces in capitalist countries to fight for socialism in their own countries.

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had to face the first and most difficult test in its life (the Nazi invasion and the following terrible war), the working class and other sections of the working people in capitalist countries as well as the entire people in backward countries rallied in defence of the land of socialism. The victorious end of the anti-fascist war, therefore, led to an unprecedented upsurge of revolutionary activity throughout the world culminating in people's democratic and socialist revolutions in a large number of European and Asian countries.

While before the war the world had been divided between the one and only socialist country, then in existence, and a large number of capitalist countries, the latter encircling the former, the victory in the anti-fascist war led to the creation of a large number of new people's democratic and socialist states in Europe and Asia. Together with the Soviet Union, they constituted a socialist camp, thus breaking the encirclement of a socialist country by a number of

capitalist countries.

Nationalists and Communists in the War Years

Reference may in this context be made to a big debate between Indian nationalists and Communists in the forties when the people and leaders of the first land of socialism were engaged in the titanic battle against fascism. The nationalists were full of sympathy for and admired the Soviet people in their historic battle of defence. They wanted to help the Soviet Union and in fact were prepared to cooperate with their own national enemy, provided the national demand was conceded. It was only when the arrogant rulers refused to concede the national demand that they gave the call for the "Quit India" struggle.

The Communists were at one with the nationalists in their anxiety to help the Soviet Union and for that purpose to cooperate even with the national oppressor. They also denounced the attitude of the rulers in refusing to concede the national demand. They, however, argued that, the question at issue to be decided in the war being the freedom of all nations from the imperialist stranglehold, the best way to secure freedom (compel the British rulers to concede the national demand) was to participate energetically

in the anti-fascist war.

Subsequent events show the correctness or otherwise of the two approaches to the question. Was it the intensity of the 'Quit India' struggle, or the international repercussions of Soviet victory in the antifascist war, together with the wave of militant mass struggles that broke out at the end of the war, that forced Britain to quit India on August 15, 1947? To put this question is to answer it.

On the Conflict with China

Another occasion on which the two trends came into conflict, and that more than a decade after the attainment of independence, was when sharp differences arose between India and China on the border question. The nationalists at large were unanimous (even a section of Communists joining), chose the method of "armed resistance to the aggressor"; rather than seeking a peaceful solution through

The result was that, when the land of socialism mutual negotiations. On the strength of a strident the land of socialism mutual negotiations. in fact a hysterical, campaign against "the Chine aggressor", they spurned all offers of peaceful settle ment, including those made no less a person that Chinese Prime Minister Chou Enlai during his 196 visit to India. The Communists on the other hand from the very beginning, pleaded for a conciliator approach, willingness to adopt a give and take att tude. Here again, history has proved that this line has been proved correct. It is a matter of satisfac tion that initiatives were taken originally by India Gandhi and carried forward by Rajiv Gandhi, settle the dispute through negotiations.

Nationalism and Communism for Peace

Barring these two occasions when the two trend came into conflict with each other, the Congress and Communists have joined in taking the country along the path of determined struggle for world peace national liberation, democracy and social advance India today is playing a key role in world politic on this basis. However, non-Communist nationalis do not acknowledge that the Socialist world is inher ently a force for world peace, while world capitalist is force of war. Many of them tend to equate "the two superpowers" — the USA and the USSR -"equally responsible" for the drive towards a nucle castastrophe. The Communists, therefore, consider it necessary to demarcate themselves from the rest the nationalists, as on several other questions, on the question of world peace as well.

There is, however, a broad area of agreement of the basis of which a united peace movement can be build up in India. On a world scale in fact the peace

movement is developing.

Peace and Nation-Building

The stand adopted by India on questions of work peace, anti-colonial struggle etc. has been of great help internally, that is, for the development of the nation on independent lines. It was this that enabled her, in the 1950s to begin with, to scotch the cor spiracy of imperialist powers to keep India as back ward as she used to be under colonialism, denying her the opportunity to industrialise her econom under the plea that, for a country like India, der lopment only of agriculture, small and cottage industries etc. was the appropriate method of every small and cottage industries etc. nomic development. Our Government could break this policy of imperialism only because of the at rendered by the socialist countries.

Beginning with the building of the Bhilai Ste Plant, the first socialist power in the world, USSR, helped our rapid industrialisation, the growl of heavy industry in particular. The process expanded itself ded itself into our relations with all socialist coll tries. The existence of a growingly powerful social world, in other worlds, became our reserve force the process of modernisation of our economy. It sli

continues.

Again, India along with other Third Wol countries is today faced with the evertightening trap against which the Third World countries strongly assisted by the socialist world, are fighting heroic battle. This in the near future is going

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Politically too, friendship with the socialist powers has been of great help to India as to other Third World countries. Had it not been for the diplomatic er hand and political support extended by the socialist world the Soviet Union above all), the United States and its allies (including Pakistan) would have created a very serious situation on our borders. It was alliance with the USSR that helped us to beat back the repeated attacks launched by US-backed Pakistan. Even sections of the ruling circles who, left to themselves, would have adopted anti-Soviet positions have, therefore, refrained from it. The policy of non-alignment and friendship with the socialist power is thus a matter of life and death for India - a fact recognised even by anti-Communists.

Reforms in Socialist Countries

Let me now refer to an important development of current importance - the economic, political and other reforms that are being introduced in all socialist countries including the Soviet Union and China. It would in fact be interesting to note that some of these reforms were introduced in China earlier than in the Soviet Union and that every socialist country has now started adopting reforms of one or another kind. Why has this happened. why is every socialist country introducing one or another kind of reforms in every field of its activity? In answering these questions, there is a basic divergence between the Communists and the rest of our political spectrum.

The Communists in India, as their comrades in the rest of the world, agree with the leaders and spokesman of socialist countries that the developments of the last few decades - over seven in the Soviet Union and shorter periods in other socialist countries - have certainly witnessed remarkable growth in every aspect of social life. They have, at the same time, brought to the forefront certain problems without whose solution, the socialist system cannot advance further.

The system was eminently fitted to meet the earlier circumstances when the extremely backward economy and cultural life of the respective countries had to be rapidly developed. The rate of growth in socialist countries during that period was far higher than in the comparable capitalist countries. Compare, for example, the development of the USSR during the first five or six plans with the development for the same (first five or six plan) period in India. The difference is unmistakable.

Of late, however, the rate of growth in socialist countries has been slowing down in some lines like the development and practical use of science and technology. Capitaltechnology, the key to further development. Capitalism is show: ism is showing a more creditable record than socialism in some ism in some respects. There has in fact been what is called is called a certain amount of stagnation in the development of socialism; unless this is broken, world

Examining this problem, the leaders of the socialist world have detected some serious defects in the functioning of socialism. Intensive discussions have been and are still going on in every socialist country on how to remove these defects, how to restructure the economy and democratise sociocultural life. The innovations that are being made constitute the mechanism for the restructuring and democratisation of all aspects of social life.

Indian Communists on the Reforms

While the Communists in India, as in the rest of the world, have reservations on one or another type regarding the merits and demerits of one or another particular measure of reform, they support the need for a radical change in the economy, political life, education and culture and so on. This is exactly what the Russian terms, perestroika and glasnost, mean. We support them.

We Communists are of the view that the introduction of these reforms does not constitute a retreat from socialism as is alleged by the enemies of the socialist system. For, the essentials of the socialist system like the state of collective ownership of the major means of production, leadership of the working class in the state and political system; the alliance of the working class and peasantry constituting the social basis of the political and cultural system, etc. continue. It is within the framework of their continuance and steady strengthening that the reforms are being introduced. The reforms are in fact intended to bring about a greater measure of active participation by the mass of the working people in the organisation and management of the economy, managing the political and administrative system, developing education and cultural life, etc. They, therefore, take socialism further forward thantaking it backward. To quote Comrade Gorbachev, "more democracy, more socialism".

Non-Communists on the other hand, consider the reforms as an admission of the failure of the system, a retreat from it, a return to capitalism, etc. The big and monopoly press in all capitalist countries including India carry on an organised campaign of "exposing" socialism as "an utter failure". The Communists obviously have to counter this campaign, pointing out that socialism is on the way forward, making it possible to catch up with and overtake capitalism, even through the scientific and technological revolution has, for the time being, put capitalism in a favourable position.

Two Models of Planning

I cannot close this study without referring to the "Russian model" supposed to have been adopted by India under Nehru's leadership. This, according to some academicians and politicians, is the reason why the planning envisaged by Nehru has allegedly ended in fiasco.

My answer is that India under Nehru did not adopt "the Russian model". It is true that the perspective of planning outlined by Nehru was industrialisation with special Denizatasis Aryan Samail Follogation Chammibians dangers stitute a small segment of the population. This form of industrialisation has a parrow heavy industries as in the USSR. That, however, does not make it "modelled on the Soviet planning" For, the strating point of the latter was the implementation of two basic socio-economic reforms anti-feudal agrarian revolution and nationalisation of major industries. In India, on the other hand reforms were minimal. Land monopoly has changed in from but continue in the new forms: As for nationalisation of industries, it is unimaginable in a "mixed economy" like that of India. Prabhat Patnaik observes in an article in the Social Scientist (No. 177, February, 1988 pp. 13-14):

Central to the specific argument of this paper is a distinction between two alternative trajectories of growth. Where industrialisation occurs within a framework of extreme land concentration, and the consequent dominance of a class of landlords over the social and economic life of the countryside, the meagreness of agricultural growth and the widening class and regional disparities the countryside, which follow from this dominance, keep the large potential rural market untapped for industry. The domestic market remains confined largely to the urban consumers, who no matter, what their absolute

This form of industrialisation has a narrow social becomes plagued fairly soon with balance payment upon unampleyment difficulties, has little impact upon unemployment the sectoral distribution of the work-force and is altoget of a fragile character. The fact that even a country India with the legacy of a historic freedom strugg and with a framework of democratic institutions, a appears to be getting bogged down in the morass of su appears to be getting bogged down in the horass of su an industrialisation path, only underscores the poi As against this, one can think of an alternative tree tory of growth, a precondition for which is an attack landlordism, where industrialisation is based essential upon the potentially vast rural market that comes in its own as a result of rapid agricultural growth with even regional spread. Such industrialisation is social more broadbased, is more intensive in its use of los resources, and is hence more effective as an antidote unemployment and backwardness.

The crisis of Indian planning on which I have written elsewhere is the result of the first "trajec tory" of "growth" referred to by Prof Patnail As opposed to this is the "trajectory" envisage by the pre-split CPI and the two CPIs since the split.

Satya Deva: Punjab Terrorism

(Contd. from page 13)

and Sikhs at Hindu temples, marriages between them continue to take place, most Sikhs are critical of terrorism in Punjab and most Punjabi Hindus are critical of the Delhi riots, the terrorists have been killing Sikhs as well as Hindus, and so on. The real conflict is not between Sikhs and Hindus but between the land-owning and capital-owning sections of the bourgeoisie. The Akalis are consciously opposed to Dilli Sarkar due to its collusion with the capital-owning bourgeoisie. The Anandpur Sahib Resolution lays "particular stress on the need to break the monopolistic hold of the capitalists foisted on the Indian economy by the 30 years of Congress rule in India. This capitalist hold enabled the Central Government to assume all powers in its hands after the manner of Mughal imperialism, This was bound to thwart the economic progress of the states and injure the social and economic interests of the people.'

Our analysis of the problem leads to clear directives for dealing with it. The first consideration must be the plight of the poor peasantry. Steps must be taken to make the small farm profitable. This would bring about some justice on the agrarian front and take away much of the support for extremism. What is most required is the supply of agricultural inputs of good quality at proper prices. This can be achieved by the entry of the public sector in a big way in this area, and the maintenance

of the price line.

Another step must be implementation of land reforms relating to imposition of the ceiling on land holding and tenancy rights. This would open the way to the provision of land to many of the landless, and would break the power of the big farmer - the power behind extremism. Big farmers can be compensated for the loss of their lands by being helped to take to industry - big, medium or small. The third step must be aimed at the introduction of more large scale industry into Punjah Industrialisation is, after all, the ultimate ways resolving the conflict between the land and capital owing sections; this is the way development lies.

The public sector can be used for hastening the peace of industrialisation as has already been don to some extent. What Punjab needs most is agre based industry, food processing industry, refriger tion and cold storage, and better transport facilities Development of this kind would make agricultur export-oriented. Fourthly, efforts must additional be made to expand, as soon as possible, employment opportunities for educated youth by giving the appropriate training and loans. And finally, more autonomy should be given to the States. For the to be meaningful, they must be given more assured financial resources, for example, through sharing of the corporation tax between the Centr and the States.

Measures outlined above are likely to provide solid base for the eradication of extremism Permanency of peace requires changes in the object tive situation and not merely meeting terrorism of the big farmer with state terrorism. \square

NOTES

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4. Ibid.

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8. Satya Deva, "The National Seed Project in India Journal of Administration Overseas, October, 1980.

9. G.S. Bhalla and G.K. Chadha, Green Revolution and the Small Peasant, Delhi, Concept Publishing Co., 1983, p. 134.

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Renaissance and Process of Nation-Building

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THE process of nation-building is a painstaking and most complex venture. It might be based on a vision as that of Mahatma Gandhi or Nehru or some very radical one. But, however sound the vision, it encounters expected and unexpected kinks and twists while being translated into reality. Any process of development unleashes contradictory, competing as well as conflicting forces. No process of development, howsoever neatly conceived or designed, is free of this.

The founding fathers of our Constitution conceived of a casteless, non-sectarian secular society. Also, the Nehruvian model presumed that spread of science and technology would act against casteist and communalist attitudes and ensure the spread and consolidation of secular forces. In theory Nehru had the grand vision of a secular India whose people would harness their energies in building modern temples, that is, dams and industries. However, things did not work out as had been envisaged. Instead of stressing on our modern temples we are killing each other for Ram Janambhoomi and Babri Masiid.

Nehru was not completely unaware of the difficulties and complexities. He was conscious of the sociological problems and economic backwardness. He knew these could create difficulties. "The real problems of India are economic, of poverty, of low standards. As soon as these are tackled aggressively, as they should be, and modern industry grows, bringing higher standards in its train, the minority problem fades away. It has been a product of unemployment of the middle classes, who had few avenues of work open to them and looked for employment to the state."

Years of developmental experience have shown that what Nehru assumed did not turn out to be true. Like poverty, prosperity too creates great many problems. It creates privileges which are defended at any cost and by any means. By means of religion as well. Religion finds in prosperity an unexpected advocate. Communalism and casteism are not wholly the result of poverty and unemployment. Prosperity in Punjab has created the worst kind of parochialism. Apart from injustices perpetrated by the state and many genuine grievances, the rich peasantry in Punjab is fighting to retain its Driviles its privileges which, it perceives, are being lost.
Religious to defend them. Religious fanaticism is employed to defend them. Earlier, the Muslim feudal, upper class and business interests to make the carve out interests had used religious fanaticism to carve out a domain of their own.

Thus we see that economic development creates many dilemmas. It creates fanaticism alongwith this dilemma? prosperity. How to grapple with this dilemma? Is it at all possible to overcome it? Does any model, Nehruvian Nehruvian, socialistic or any other have the potentiality to fiality to solve this dilemma or resolve this contradiction? The socialist model has its own virtues, informed as it is of social justice and eradication of oppression but it has its limitations too. No system or model, let us bear in mind, can resolve all the problems. This awareness can induce a great deal of realism in understanding the situation.

Also, the process of development and nationbuilding heightens our self-awareness, urge for our identity, regional, linguistic, caste or communal. When we became free the urge for national identity was most intense and it was quite natural. It was only the sense of national identity which sustained our fight against the alien and imperialistic forces. At the time of freedom a chunk of our country fell apart from us. This further heightened the sense of our identity. However, soon the imbalances in regional, caste and communal growth began to sharpen other identities.

Those left out in the economic race began to feel that the national identity is being defined in a hegemonistic way by those who have got maximum out of the system, that is, by the upper caste Hindus. The lower castes, the minorities and the tribals thus began to stress their respective identities. Thus this competitive identity-consciousness is strengthening regional, parochial, casteist and communal forces in our country. Competitive mobilisation in a democratic polity creates its own stresses and strains on the social fabric of the society. Communal and parochial forces are thus gaining in strength.

A multi-religious, multi-ethnic society is bound to feel such pressures in a developing society. This is understandable. However, it does not mean that it should not worry us. This worry should be not only on political grounds (with a view to maintain the unity and integrity of the country) but also on moral and humanistic grounds. A heightened sense of caste and communal identity leads to zealotism, communal fanaticism and religious bigotry. This would and does result in mutual slaughter which is highly condemnable on moral and humanistic grounds.

SOME people, specially rationalists, think that the problem cannot be solved until religion is done away with. It is religion which makes man bigoted and fanatic. Hence they seek to combat it at the religious level. This viewpoint is not new. It acquired force and respectability in sixteenth and seventeenth century Europe. Philosophers like D'Holbach were militant atheists. D'Holbach went to the extent of

The friend of mankind cannot be friend of God, who at all times has been a real scourge to the earth. of nature will not be the instrument of deceitful chimeras. by which the world is made an abode of illusions; the D'Holbach also ridiculed the concept that religion

insures morality. He wrote his three-volume Morale Universelle to refute this position. Rejecting the position that religion ensures morality, D'Holbach wrote: "Inspite of a hell so horrid even in description, what crowds of abondoned criminals fill our cities... Are condemned thieves and murderers either atheists or skeptics?"3 His militant atheism also made him write:

Against one timid man whom this idea (of hell) restraints, there are thousands upon whom it operates to no effect, there are millions whom it makes irrational, whom it turns into savage persecutors, whom it converts into wicked ... fanatics; there are millions whose minds it disturbs, and whom it diverts from their duty to society.1

However, Voltaire did not agree with D'Holbach. Voltaire defended religion, though not militantly and

fanatically. He wrote:

The theist is a man firmly persuaded of the existence of a Supreme Being equally good and powerful, who has formed all ... existences; who punishes crimes without cruelty, and rewards virtuous actions with kindness. The theist does not know how God punishes, how he rewards, how he pardons, for he is not presumptuous enough to flatter himself that he understands how God acts; but he knows that God is just. The difficulties opposed to a Providence do not stagger him in his faith, for they are only great difficulties, not proofs; he submits himself to that Providence, although he perceives only some of its effects and some appearances; and judging of the things he does not see by those who sees, he thinks that this Providence prevades all places and all ages.... He believes that religion consists neither in the opinions of incomprehensible metaphysics nor in vain decorations, but in adoration and justice. To do good is his worship, to submit himself to God is his doctrine... He laughs at Loreto and Mecca, but he succors the indigent and defends the

Thus we see that Voltaire comes quite close to the present day concept of liberation theology. It is not metaphysical doctrines of religion which are the product of speculative exercises of human mind that are important but compassion and feeling for the indigent and the oppressed that represent the true spirit of religion, according to Voltaire, the great

mind of French enlightenment.

Erich Fromm, a Marxist psychologist, raises a very important question. He says: "The question is not religion or not but which kind of religion, whether it is one furthering man's development, the unfolding of his specifically human powers, or one paralysing them."6 Thus what one must denounce is not religion per se but religion which is authoritarian, which tramples upon human freedom and development, progress and change. Erich Fromm feels:

That early Christianity is humanistic and not authoritarian is evident from the spirit and text of all Jesus' teachings. Jesus' precept that 'the kingdom of God is within you'is the simple and clear expression of non-authoritarian thinking. But only a few hundred years later, after Christianity had ceased to be the religion of the poor and humble peasants, artisans, and slaves (the Am barrez) and had become the religion of those ruling the Roman Empire, that authoritarian trend in Christianity became dominant. Even so, the conflict between the authoritarian and humanistic principles in Christianity never ceased.

We have discussed the question of atheism and religion at length as it is necessary to our understanding of the concept of renaissance in the context of India. Religion is what we make of religion or religious tradition. The kind of religion which

adorer of truth will not compromise with Talsenoral Foundation Shennal and Canadario day by fundamentalists is aut ritarian religion where what is demanded is of dience to the dogmas as defined by the authorities As pointed out by Erich Fromm, the noted psych analyst, religion is basically humanistic. In mys or bhakti tradition it becomes much more so. "The mystics," says Fromm, "have been deeply imbue with the experience of man's strength, his likens to God. ... Not fear and submission but love an the assertion of one's own powers are the basis mystical experience. God is rot a symbol of power over mon but of man's own power." (emphasis)

We have opted for a democratic polity and weat striving our utmost to deepen and broaden of democracy. Democracy is the very negation of author ritarianism. Thus any tradition, religious or other wise, that leads to, or strengthens, authoritarianism must be fought resolutely. Authoritarianism is no only negation of democracy, it is negation of flower ing of human genius, development of his produ tive personality and no renaissance can ever take place if such religius or political authoritarianism

in any form, is allowed to take roots.

The Indian renaissance, it should be noted, cannot take place by ignoring the humanistic religion traditions of Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Islan Sikhism and Christianity. These religions have of course, undergone great change from the prime dial experiences of their founders. All of these religions had, in their inception, deeply humanisti compassionate and creative traditions. But the religions, at one time or the other, came to be asse ciated with ruling establishments and thus lo their humanism and acquired authoritarian trend which were constrictive for human creativity and

joy for living.

What fundamentalists seek to revive is the author ritarian, constrictive and dogmatic traditions as on such traditions can promote their interests. An free and questioning mind is an anathema to the Any such mind challenges their authority and the negate the very purpose for which they seek revive religion. The fundamentalist movements all the religious communities of India have done greatest disservice to religious humanism. The seek to destroy it. It was different with Europe renaissance. It could, for various reasons, con pletely negate religion or even religious huminism. Indian renaissance, in view of its concre historical conditions, cannot, in any case, igno religious humanism unless one seeks to comb renaissance to a very small, urban elite which accept atheism as a philosophical a priori position.

During the renaissance in Europe, specially Italy, the humanists came to the fore. Says

Durant:

It was under the Medici, or in their day, that the hunists captivated the mind of Italy, turned it from religious to philosophy, from heaven to earth, and revealed to astonished generation the riches of pagan thought and These men mad about scholarship received, as early Ariosto, the name of umanisti because they called study of classic culture umanisti because they study of classic culture umanita the 'humanities'...

Will Durant further continues:

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Greece and Rome. This was humanism. 10

For our indigenous renaissance, we have to fall back on our tradition. Those traditions, needless to have to be humanistic tradition. For extracsay, have elixir of humanistic traditions. For extracting this elixir of humanistic traditions we will have to churn the ocean of our traditions, religious as well as cultural. The common denominator of all this exercise should be human person, not abstract metaphysical systems. More often than not, our religious systems have tended to be quite abstract and speculative. It produces often confounding and conflicting results. We have to discover, as well as evolve, religious traditions centred around human person, his sensibilities and his joys and pains.

Indian religious as well as cultural traditions are quite rich in this matter. Buddhism places human person at the centre of its thought. Removal of dukkha (suffering) is its central concern. Dukkha is a matter of feeling and hence a human category, not abstract metaphysical. Thus Buddhist tradition can be a rich source of religious renaissance in our

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One more thing we have to bear in mind. Indian religious and cultural traditions are pluralistic and no renaissance in the Indian context can take place ignoring religious, and cultural pluralism. Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Islam, Christianity and Sikhism are important religions in this country. Even Islam, Zoroastrianism and Christianity should not be looked upon as alien religions. These religions have developed indigenous traditions and local roots. Considering them alien would only strengthen communal and sectarian tendencies. Separatism, it must be noted, is a political and not a religious or cultural phenomenon.

Indic Islam has drawn much from indigenous traditions, specially in its Sufistic form. The Sufis not only adopted the local religious idom but also local religio-cultural traditions. Sufism as such, as pointed out before, is humanistic in orientation. Also sufism comes quite close to the bhakti movement which is equally humanistic. There would be nothing wrong to draw from these traditions of the past to nourish Indian renaissance. Again it is not necessary to draw upon metaphysical and speculative elements in sufi and bhakti movements but their humanistic

traditions.

The rising tide of fundamentalism can be more effectively countered by drawing upon these healthy traditions of the past rather than pure rationalism. In order to understand this we also have to understand the stand the socio-economic genesis of contemporary fundamentalism. It is not mere revival of religion and religion. and religious traditions; it is a far more complex

Fundamentalism is nothing if not political but its genesis is not always political. It thrives in particular socio-economic conditions. In a way Marx's insights into insights into religion are quite remarkable. It is the sign and the religion as an sigh and the solace of the oppressed. Religion as an illusion is resolated of the oppressed. illusion is needed so long as the objective conditions necessitatineeded so long as the objective described. necessitating this illusion are not changed. Underdevelopment on one hand and sluggish capitalist

joy and pain of his senses and fee Piguszed by Atvathem at a found a level of the literature and in these as most abundantly misery for a large section of Indian people. They and perfectly revealed in the literature and art of ancient and perfectly revealed in the literature and art of ancient and perfectly revealed in the literature and art of ancient and perfectly revealed in the literature and art of ancient are literature. conditions in urban areas losing their organic roots and traditional identity. They fall back upon and cling to their traditions and religious conventions. This is fully exploited by unscrupulous politicians for political mobilisation and that is how fundamentalism is born.

The inhuman conditions strengthen illusionary religion which is substitute for real life deprivations. Both priests and politicians reinforce these illusions; priests by shifting the kingdom of God from here on earth to hereafter in heavens and politicians by refusing to restructure the society so as to ensure economic justice to the oppressed and the poor. Also, priests and politicians both benefit from these conditions. Both trade on religious sentiments.

Moreover, in a competitive polity and economy fundamentalism is made use of by all those in the game. Whether it is the Shah Bano movement or the Ram Janambhoomi-Babri Masjid controversy, the same game is being played by the fundamentalist forces. The state too plays the same game by siding with or manouvering one or the other category of fundamentalists. The state caved in before Muslim fundamentalists in the case of the Shah Bano verdict and manouvered Hindu fundamentalists by getting the Babri Masjid lock opened. Needless to say, all this resulted in intensifying communal feelings among both the communities.

III

THOUGH in European renaissance women's liberation was not an important question, in Indian renaissance it is. The women's question is also closely linked to the religious question. The fundamentalists make women the first victim of their movement. More and more restrictions are sought to be put on them. Whether it is sati or Shah Bano, the male attitude is the same. In order to make Indian renaissance more meaningful women must be ensured equal status in the society alongwith men. Women, through centuries of conditioning, have interiorised the ideology of unequal status. It is, therefore, necessary to make efforts to conscientise them. We very well know that interiorisation of oppression by women has been achieved through religious ideology. It would, therefore, be necessary to creatively interpret religion and draw upon, selectively if necessary, scriptures to legitimise equality of sexes.

Islam, for example, had given very high status to women which was taken away from her by the conservative male-dominated Islamic society. What is meaningful for the common people is social tradition rather than scriptural authority. There is nothing, for example, in the Quran or the Prophet's sunna (tradition) which militates against woman becoming head of a state. Yet, Benazir's election as a head of state has sparked off a controversy not only in Pakistan but also among Indian Muslims. It is being argued that a woman cannot become head of an Islamic state.

Scriptures are often vague igue venbyanybisanous dordatio Itcals namilitates against the restructuring of society obvious reasons. A scripture is revealed in specific spacio-temporal conditions. But while dealing with these specific conditions it also makes normative statements. Thus ambiguity and contradictions creep Thus one must distinguish what is contextual from what is normative. Traditions which are not socially relevant in changed conditions must be either reconstructed or even rejected, if necessary or if not Such rejection or conducive to reconstruction. reconstruction can evoke intense passions in this male-dominated society. But the battle will have to be fought with equal passions from the women's

IV

THE role of media is also very vital, in fact more vital that any other factor. Apart from newspapers, the TV - the electronic medium - is far more powerful. However, the medium is an instrument which can be used either way. It can preach what we want it to preach. To be frank, the media in our country is promoting more of conservatism and fundamentalism. There is more communalism in the air as our newspapers, radio and the TV in one way or the other, promote it. Though all are not sinners but many are. The language press is much more.

My investigation of major communal riots show that quite often local language newspapers inject a very strong dose of communalism and communal bigotry into the minds of local people. It is very rare that these papers play a sane role in reporting, quashing rumours or educating people on the right lines. I have often seen that these language papers become powerful instruments for spreading baseless rumours. During the Ahmedabad riots of 1985-86 even national English dailies played a similar role.

It would be very important to engage in content analysis of the language press as far as women's issues, communal issues and reinforcing religious conservatism are concerned. Such a study can be quite revealing. It can easily explode the myth that these papers are a means of public education and objective reporting of events. These papers are, more often than not, carriers of the worst kind of social conservatism.

It should also be borne in mind that the newspapers are controlled by powerful vested interests, local or national. Their policies are determined in keeping with their interests, not by policies and principles framed in keeping with the social interests. One can do very little in such a situation. It is very unfortunate that the media which could have played a very powerful role in strengthening the secular forces, has become the most formidable obstacle on their path. It is strengthening competitive communalism today.

The less one talks about the television, the better. It is being used both by the state and the multinationals and the monopolists to sell a very explosive mix, that is, religious conservatism alongwith consumerism; religious conservatism for the poor and consumerism for the upper classes. Prolonged exposures to various religious programmes, often superstitious, strengthens socio-political conservatism, In a backward country the electronic media like TV is often used, by the status quoists, to reinform social conservatism, and religious orthodoxy. The TV is providing escapist fare and is more dangerou than cinema of that category as it has taken cinema to the doorsteps of the viewers. It is highly necessan to work out a systematic critique of the TV program mes in our country. It has also become a powerful medium for imposing the North Indian dominated upper caste culture on the whole country.

WE cannot discuss Indian renaissance without talk ing about the spread of modern science and technology. Much has already been written about i Modern technology has its own curses. It breed both inequality and alienation. One should no eulogise technology per se. It is also not only insensi tive to environment, it is blind to it. It bring affluence to a limited section of the society at a ven high cost to the people. Also, it creates further complications in a country like India.

The fundamental question in this respect is: technol logy for whom? The answer is often embarassing and hence hardly ever raised except by some radio groups. The advocates of Indian renaissance should not end up accepting modern technology without certain reservations. Renaissance is very sensitive to human feelings, to culture, to joys of life, to human dignity, in short to being, not merely to having Technology concerns itself with things, not will people. It is not things but people, the subject of history, who enrich culture and civilisation through their creative activities. Things are only the means Erich Fromm points out that "Marx's whole critique of capitalism and his vision of socialism are rooted in the concept that human self-activity is paralysed in the capitalist system and that the goal is to restor full humanity by restoring activity in all spheres life".12

We thus have to usher in a society wherein man will be free, not constrained by the dead past by inspired by what is best and living in it to enrich his creativity, wherein technology does not enslar but enhance his dignity, wherein his freedom is no directed or manipulated but stimulated by highest and loftiest values to promote life and it joys.

Notes

- 1. See N.L. Gupta ed. Nehru on Communalism (Delhi, 196)
- 2. D'Holbach, System II, Ch. xii, cf. Will and Ari Durant, The Age of Voltaire (New York, 1965), pp. 704. 3. Will and Ariel Durant, op. cit., pp. 705. 4. Ibid.

 - 4. Ibid.
- 6. See Erich Fromm, Psychoanalysis and Religion (YD)
 University Press, 1972), pp. 26. 7. Ibid, pp. 47.
 - 8. Ibid, pp. 48. 9. Will Durant, 7 10. Ibid pp. 77-78. The Renaissance (New York, 1953), pp. 1
- 11. See Erich Fromm, To Have or To Be (London, 1979) 12, Ibid, pp. 99,

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Lebanon: A Banana Republic Without Bananas?

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LEBANON has taken one more stride towards formalising its de-facto partition into sectarian cantons following the political standoff between Muslims and Christians over choosing a successor to President Amin Gemayel. Left without a President, the precarious Lebanese Republic has been seized by yet another formidable political crisis, with two governments currently competing for power.

Ever since it became independent of France in 1943, Lebanon has struggled from one crisis to another, avoiding disaster by the narrowest of margins. However, never before did Lebanon experience the pangs of being ruled by two rival governments across the green line in Beirut, each claiming

legitimacy and disputing that of the other.

In the eastern half of Beirut, there is a provisional government headed by the army commander, General Michel Aoun, who was appointed by the outgoing President Gemayel on September 23, 1988. When the Christians have declared their loyalty, the Muslims on the other hand have questioned its legitimacy. As a result, the writ of Aoun's cabinet barely runs beyond the confines of the presidential palace at Baabda in east Beirut.

Moreover, Aoun's caretaker government, on the resignation of the non-Christian members has been whittled down to a government of the Christians and for the Christians only; whereas in the western part of Beirut, the Muslim leadership, leaned on the Syrian backing, has recognised the authrority of the five-member cabinet of Sunni Prime Minister Salim Hoss although it has not met since late 1985.

In the rough and tumble of the Lebanese politics even the last residue of constitutional structures of the country has become defunct. And nowhere is this more evident than in the institution of presidency that once helped maintain the illusion of a

unitary state in fragmented Lebanon. The Lebanese political system was well overdue for an overhaul when the existing Chamber of Deputies was elected in 1972. Since then, the Chamber has simply renewed its own mandate every two years in the absence of nationwide parliamentary elections. Nature has also taken its toll of the ageing incumber. incumbents, reducing their number from full 99 to the current depleted body of 76. These are the same deputies deputies who had voted in the Syrian-backed Elias Sarkis in 1976 had voted in the Syrian-backed Elias Sarkis in 1976 and the Israeli-backed Bashic Gemayel, and affect 176 and the Israeli-backed Bashic Amin and after his assassination, his brother Amin Gemavel: his assassination, his brother failure to Gemayel in 1982. Unfortunately, their failure to elect a new many septemelect a new President before the deadline on September 23 ber 23, 1988 produced a preposterous mess in

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What has bedeviled the efforts at avoiding the constitutional vacuum is a much wider and complex problem of political reform that has remained unresolved since the 1976 civil war. The abortive election session on August 18 and September 22 as well as the Syrian conspiracy to place its protege as the head of the republic and the strong resistance of the Lebanese Forces (LF) are, in essence, the various dimensions of the same problem.

The political reform includes mainly a change in electoral laws, the equitable division of seats in Parliament and the greater sharing of high posts in civil service and the military among the major sects. However, the Christians and the Muslims on different sides of the Lebanese political divide, have so far concurred very little on these issues. Christians, on the contrary, have fiercely defended the existing system and adopted devious means to preserve the status quo. This is precisely because they are sceptical of any systemic mutation that might deprive them of their political edge, conferred by the National Pact in 1943.

The National Pact that confirmed the confessional character of the state made the sectarian ratio as the basis on which the Lebanese political system has been built up. The country has operated on the political fiction that the 1932 census, taken by the French, accurately reflected the distribution of state power. Accordingly, the inter-communal relations in pluralistic Lebanon have been structured on the basis of a ratio of 6:5 in favour of the Christians.

This structure is again translated into parliamentary representation as well as the allocation of senior governmental positions in which the President is a Maronite, the Prime Minister is a Sunni and the Speaker, a Shia Muslim. Interestingly, in recent years the demographic changes in Lebanon have

disturbed the existing confessional balance. For example, the Christian community that once comprised 52 per cent has become the minority. numbering not more than 40 per cent of the total Lebanese population. Whereas, the Shiites have become the largest single group with the Sunnis in the second place. The Muslims, particularly the Shia community which is the most economically backward group emboldened by Syrian support, have pressed for a greater share of the national pie. In contrast, the Maronite leadership has indicated that it would prefer the secession of the Maronite heartland from the rest of Lebanon to surrendering their privileges through Syrian diktat.

In brief, it is the complexity of this problem together with the multiplicity and variability of other factors involved, that have made the Lebanese polity more an apocryphal in the last thirteen years of upheavals. In this context, the developments that preceded the current political deadlock, particularly

during the six-year presidential term of Gemayel, are

of great significance.

In 1982, when Amin Gemayel took office, the shock of Israeli invasion had given way to a new hope of reconstructing the fractured nation. For, the Israeli defeat of the PLO and the withdrawal of the Syrian forces to Bequa valley created a favourable situation for President Gemayel to push through the reforms. Not/only he failed to take advantage of this also allowed the imbalance of power to persist

Furthermore, the Christian militia encouraged by Gemayel's acquiesence alongwith Israeli protection tried to expand its sweep in the Shouf mountain at the expense of the Druze. With the outbreak of the sectarian war between them on September 1983, the process of the real dismemberment of the country began. Again in 1986, President Gemayel made common cause with the Christian hardliners in opposing a Syrian-sponsored reform package. And this, in the main has made any sort of entente between east and west Beirut well nigh impossible today

Besides, the regular Lebanese army, the cornerstone of Gemayel's attempt to restore order, acted in the interests of the Maronites than as a national force. Despite numerous warnings by Syria, the major power broker in Lebanon, the Lebanese army did precious little to take control of the LF-dominated east Beirut. Whereas, the Syrian forces since their deployment on February last year have achieved a remarkable breakthrough in ending the militia rule in west Beirut including its southern suburbs. Surprisingly there was no parallel move by the Lebanese army for nearly 18 months in the eastern

The partisan nature of Gemayel's administration is best symbolised by the vaulting arrogance of Samir Geagea, the leader of the Christian Labanese Forces militia. In the last two years of Gemayel's incumbency, Geagea acquired a powerful stature by increasing his following in the Christian camp. His LF is at present the most cohesive and influential militia of the contending Christian factions. And it is the only militia in Lebanon that has continued to defy Damascus.

The LF's resolve to challenge the Syrian preeminence in Lebanon has been stiffened by the arrival of Iraq on the scene as an interested player. Iraq, the arch rival of Syria in the region, is reportedly pouring arms into the Christian enclave for Syria's support of Iran in the Gulf war. In addition, the LF has concluded almost a defacto alliance with the PLO against their common enemy, Syria.

The Geagea-led LF controls about one-tenth of Lebanon's territory and nearly 25 per cent of its population that effectively gives it an unofficial veto over the fate of any presidential aspirant. This is indeed a rare prerogative by virtue of which the LF successfully blocked the legislation process for the election of Syria-supported Suleiman Franjieh as the next republican head on August 22. These Christian hardliners were also chiefly responsible for the abortive second election session on September 22 when Mikhail Daher, a jointly sponsored candidate of

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COMMUNICATION

Caucasian History

WITH reference to Dev Murarka's long clarification in your issue March 4, 1989 of his earlier article on the alleged "Soviet Role in Armenia" (Mainstream, December 10, 1988), I feel obliged to point out that my observations relative to his first article were not in any way meant to be critical in any personal sense.

Indeed whatever Dev Murarka, an old and esteemed friend, who also happens to reside at the source. and so has obvious advantages of access to material not easily available elsewhere, writes, merits atten-

tion, and respect.

He has, if I may add, now, in his latest article, proved his point much the better when he says, and I quote: "This time, Lenin,....took personal charge He despatched Alexander Miasnikian as his personal representative to Yerevan...gave him a letter addressed to all Caucasian Bolshevik leaders which, among other things, instructed: You will need to practice more moderation and caution, show more readiness to make concessions to the petty bourgeoisie, the intelligentsia, and particularly the peasantry.

Indeed, if that (the quotation above) had been inserted in the first article, mine own observations relative to it, would have been quite unnecessary.

Sincerely yours, Ikbal Athar 63 Rue Frederic Pelletier 1040 Brussels Belgium

March 21, 1989

America and Syria, was rejected by them.

In the face of the growing LF hostilities, Syria has formed a coalition of forces among its allies and proxies to compete with it. Syria, all through the tortuous process, tried vainly to put up a credible figure - well disposed towards syrian presence in Lebanon — who could enact the political reforms. This is clearly underlined by the Syria's determination to make the election a vehicle for change, not just a formality producing nonentity for the sake of

Amidst the protracted tussle over the question of political reform, the key issue as to how to keep the presidency alive has been bogged down. There are still no signs that the intransigence that prevented the Presidential election has lessened. Contrarily, the situation further deteriorated since October 18, when the Christian legislators boycotted the session to elect a new speaker of the parliament.

Lebanon currently has no President or parliament ary Speaker while the rival Christian and Muslim governments are vying for the recognition of their power. If this disorderly state of affairs drags on, the developments in the recent weeks have signalled Lebanon would in the process be soon reduced to banana republic without bananas.

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THE American newspaper, Washington Post has said that the financial liability settled at \$ 470 million in the Bhopal disaster case is too meagre. Its comment is: "Life is cheap in India. That, at least, was the foundation of Union Carbide's legal strategy." This strategy was based on a Third World rather than on a Western standard for valuing human life. The events which have transpired show that the legal strategy has been successful. In May 1986, Judge Keenan, while transferring the case from the USA to India, had said that it offered the Indian judiciary "a chance to stand tall".

The first requirement of any judicial opinion is utter clarity. What's surprising is that the settlement does not spell out the manner and method of determining the sum of \$ 470 million. The manner in which the compensation case has ended has attracted more criticism than praise for the apex court. Judge Holmes once said: "Great cases may make bad law". Whatever else can be said of them, great cases make great confrontations.

The decision on the Carbide case, based on the memorandum of settlement between the parties, will come up for scrutiny from various aspects. The two major aspects are:

While dealing with civil petitions whether the apex court has the power to quash criminal proceedings, including contempt proceedings, not pending before it.

In the face of the judgement on the appeal of A.R. Antulay, how would the order of the apex court ordering the quashing of criminal proceedings, including contempt proceedings, and acquitting the accused bear scrutiny? It is well known that the law relating to criminal procedure applicable to all criminal proceedings is contained in the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 and Section 320 of the Code contains the details of the offences which may be compounded with or without the permission of the court. Sub-clause (9) of Section 320 of the code runs as under:

"(9) No offence shall be compounded except as provided by this section."

The mandate of the legislature is clear from the wordings of sub-section (9) of the procedure code.

This is also as the section (9) of the procedure code.

This is also an important aspect to be kept in view.

One cannot lose sight of the fact that under Article 141 of the Constitution of India "the law declared by the Supreme Court shall be binding on all courts within the territory of India". It is in point to mention that every State of the Indian Union has article 227 of the Constitution of India has superintendence over all courts and tribunals functioning

The author is a former District and Sessions Judge Selection Grade, Haryana.

in the State. What will prevent the High Courts to quash criminal proceedings and contempt proceedings in the same manner in which the apex court has done.

It is well known that the principle underlying the administration of justice in public is that the public has a great interest in knowing what occures in a court of justice. One remembers the observations of the US Supreme Court Judge, Hugo, L. Black; "The achievement of justice is a problem which, in the final analysis, depends on what kind of government and laws control society."

The suggestion that any agency of the government is beyond public scrutiny is to be deplored. Nothing of the sort was envisioned by the framers of the Constitution. Implicit in the system of government they designed is the basic premise that unchecked power in any hands whatsoever is intolerable. The British Judge, Lord Atkin, while deciding a case, observed: "The path of criticism is a public way... Justice is not a cloistered virtue: she must be allowed to suffer the scrutiny and respectful, even though out-spoken, comments of ordinary men."

This proposition has been endorsed by our Supreme Court on more than one occasion. In the Brahma Prakash case, (1953) S.C.R. 1169 at page 1178 Justice Mukherjee while endorsing the proposition made it very clear that a "reflection on the conduct or character of a judge in reference to the discharge of his judicial duties would not be contempt, if such reflection is made in the exercise of the right of fair and reasonable criticism which every citizen possesses in respect of public acts done in the seat of justice. It is not by stifling criticism that confidence in courts can be created."

Under the provisions of "The Bhopal Gas Processing of Claims Act, 1985", the Union Government at best was a trustee for pressing the compensation claims on behalf of the gas victims. The terms of settlement agreed upon by the Government cannot bear discussion and positive publicity. The public good has suffered as it appears to have been served with great economy of intellectual effort. Moderation in the pursuit of justice is no virtue.

Next Week

Mainstream will carry a special supplement on the Indian Railways to mark the Railway Week (April 10-17, 1989). The supplement will provide a comprehensive picture of the impact of the Railways of the Indian economy, its performance over the years, its trend towards modernisation and also problems faced while executing its plans. What, then, does the Hindu-Muslim unity consist in, and how can it be best promoted? The answer is simple. It consists in our having a common purpose, a common goal, and common sorrows. It is best promoted by cooperating in order to reach the common goal, by sharing one another's sorrows and by mutual toleration. A common goal we have. We wish this great country of ours to be greater and self-governing. We have enough sorrows to share; and today, seeing that the Muhammadans are deeply touched on the question of the Khilafat and their cause is just, nothing can be so powerful for winning Muhammadan friendship for the Hindu as to give his whole-hearted support to the claim.

MAHATMA GANDHI

SAH BROTHERS

603/4 "NIRANJAN" 6th Floor 99, Netaji Subhash Road Bombay 400002

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cpl's Calcutta Congress: A Delegate's Impressions

SATYAPAL DANG

From the Howrah railway station, we were driven to the Salt Lake Stadium, the venue of the Fourteenth Congress of the CPI. The stadium constructed by the Left Front Government is said to be the biggest in Asia. It was already decorated—simply but beautifully. A comrade told us proudly: "All the decorations have been done by our own volunteers. Not a single professional was engaged." I understood what this comrade left unsaid. He was hinting that this was not the case with the CPI-M.

When the decision to hold the Party Congress at Calcutta was taken by the National Council of the Party, some of us were jubilant for the simple reason that our Party would be having its Congress in this revolutionary city after a long period of 48 years. Some apprehensions some fears were, however, there in the minds of some comrades. Our Party is not a big pary in West Bengal and is much smaller than the CPI-M. "Will the Party in Bengal be able to make the Party Congress a big success?"—this was the doubt in the minds of some leaders. The doubt proved to be totally unfounded. I asked everyone of my many old friends of student days - about the response they had been getting. The reply I got was almost the same though in different words: Response from the people has been great even in Calcutta.... Many asked us why we had been keeping away from them ... Many appreciated our being in the Left Front, our not keeping quiet about what we considered to be wrong while working for greater unity and cohesion of the Front.... Few refused to donate.... The rally on 12th March would be a really massive one."

It was clear that the response as well as the total amount collected was much beyond the expectation of the leadership of our Bengal Party. Almost the entire amount was through small donations. One of the Bengal leaders told me: "We are a smaller party than the CPI-M in West Bengal but not as small as many tend to believe. Originally many years ago we were not a part of the CPI-M-led Left Front. We loined much later. This put us at a disadvantage in the matter of representation in the assembly because we could be representation in the assembly because we could not claim any of the seats of any of the Left parties. The result has been that even those Left parties. The result has been than us have greater reparties which are smaller than us have greater representation in the assembly. Our actual mass base is bigger than would appear from our representation. representation in the assembly and the Government. Also, our Party has been growing even though not

This statement was fully borne out by the large duty in the Stadium throughout the period of the

The author, one of the tallest figures in the Central Executive Committee.

Congress. However, there did not appear to be many students amongst them.

The food served was not luxurious but was far from being frugal. Even the Punjabis were satisfied. Top leaders themselves ensured that the arrangements ran smoothly. Comrade Gopal Bannerjee, 'a former Secretary of the West Bengal State Council of the CPI, seemed to be the overall incharge. The presence of Geeta Mukherjee, MP in the kitchen was noted not infrequently. One day when I told some Punjab delegates that the "volunteer" who had just served them was Comrade Gurudas Das Gupta, MP, they looked at him with utter amazement and great respect. Gurudas had noted that a volunteer was rather slow. He had taken the food from him and was showing him how to serve quickly. Punjabis were unhappy with one aspect. They did not want to be served in courses but altogether. One said so to some Bengal comrade. The latter smilingly replied: "When in Rome why not do as Romans do!" That ended the matter happily.

Aptly named "Somnath Lahiri Nagar", the venue of the Party Congress had some specially built gates. One of the main gates had been named after Comrade Darshan Singh Canadian. It symbolised the immense ... appreciation Bengal Comrades have for the fight which the party in Punjab is waging against terrorism. There was also the terrific applause when Comrade C. Rajeswara Rao introduced to the Congress, Comrade Jaswant Kaur of Shahabad and narrated how she had faced and fought the terrorists alongwith her son and daughter-in-law. Immense has also been the help which people of West Bengal have been giving to the people of Punjab in this fight. The Party in Bengal raised more than Rs 2 lakhs for the Punjab Fund. To help the families of victims of terrorism, a broadbased Punjab Solidarity Committee got formed in Calcutta. It gave Punjab Istri Sabha about Rs 2 10 lakhs — in addition to Rs 6 lakhs given by Comrade Gurudas Das Gupta, MP During the days of the Congress, the Punjab Solidarity Committee handed over another Rs 15,000 or so to Vimla Dang for the Punjab Istri Sabha Relief Trust.

Jaswant Kaur was introduced to the delegates on March 8, the International Women's Day. The General Secretary personally greeted all the women delegates as well as the women fraternal delegates from other countries. He presented them flowers and bouquets. A resolution was also adopted.

The Political Resolution, the Political Review

The Political Resolution, the Political Review Report and the Organisational Report were discussed in plenary sessions of about 1,000 delegates from all over India after they had been presented. Thirty nine comrades participated. Most of them put forward not only their personal views but also the views of delegates of their respective States. The delegates then divided themselves into three commissions to discuss amendments to the three

documents. The commission regarding Organisation also dealt with the amendments to the Party Constitution, of which notice had been given. Reports and recommendations of the Commissions were placed before the plenary session and were adopted unanimously. Many of the comrades attending the Political Resolution Commission felt that much more time should have been there for it than it actually had, in view of the large number of amendments with which it had to deal. Because of inadequate time it could not thrash out three specific issues and recommended that these be left to be decided by the new National Council. One of these related to the question of atomic power plants and their hazards. Many delegates felt that during the discussion in the plenary session Organisation should have received much greater attention than it did. There was also the feeling that the debate about our attitude towards the anti-people policies of non-Congress-I non-Left State Governments, especially the TDP Government of Andhra, sidetracked attention from some other equally important issues. Notwithstanding all this, some issues stood out sharply. One of these was the issue of Communist unity.

The delegates left with the resolve to wage a determined struggle for unification of the Communist movement in India on a principled basis. They also felt confident that overcoming all difficulties the struggle for unity would surely succeed because Communist unity is very much needed by the toilers and by the country. In this connection, delegates went back with the understanding that a stronger CPI is needed for success in this matter and also that selfless struggle for unification of the Communist movement too would make CPI

A clarion call for struggles on the land issue went out from the Congress. It may be mentioned that unlike the CPI-M the CPI does not think that the land issue is only a propaganda slogan as yet. There was also the call that the Party must become still more struggle-oriented. There was an equal emphasis on the need of massive mass political and ideological campaigning.

The issue of communalism and especially the extremely dangerous situation arising out of the slogans and programme chalked out by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad at the Kumbh Mela was naturally seriously discussed. The CPI can be proud of the fact that it took a clear stand and refused to be influenced by any electoral considerations. demanded that the Ram Janambhumi-Babri Masjid dispute must be settled through mutual consultations and failing that the disputed site be made a national museum or memorial. With regard to all other places of worship it demanded that status quo as on August 15, 1947 be maintained. A decision to launch a powerful mass campaign to rally all patriotic forces was taken. The call was given that Communists of Hindi-speaking States must emerge as the best defenders of national unity and communal harmony like the Punjab Communists.

Together with the fight against communalism of

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGangotri ask laid down in the Political out the Resolution was to work for the replacement quity. Rajiv Gandhi Government by a Left, democratic an came up secular Government.

The controversy regarding fight against the and Constitu people policies of State Governments like that structur Andhra was resolved not by any decision to ton main th down this fight. No one wanted such a decision examini because Communists must defend the interests of working people. It was resolved by adding a sentence the nationa this fight must be carried on in a manner the and gle strengthers Left-democratic forces and also helps isolate the Congress-I. Some comments in som the Par papers characterised this as an unprincipled com Party C promise. This was altogether false. The sentend to the I only made clear the direction of our struggles non-Congress-I non-Left States. After all, Con 60 year munists stand for emergence of a Left-democrate alternatives in the States as well as at the Centr number and not for strengthening the Congress-I. On instance from the experience of this writer would as again make the point clear.

This writer was a member of the Punjab assemble the total when Punjab was ruled by the Congress as we as when it was ruled by the Akalis. Once the from the Congress Opposition vociferously supported certain Il from working class demands raised in the assembly l the CPI group. We reminded the Congress the adminis as in the case of the Akalis now, they had strong It had ? opposed the same demands when those were raise earlier when they were on the Treasury Benche And we explained this position to the entire working class in the State thereby fighting anti-labour polici gation of the Akali Ministry while at the same time seeking biggest to isolate the Congress. Clearly it was a ver

principled position.

Among the many resolutions the Congress adop ed, one supported the demand for formation of hill State of Uttarakhand out of the present UP. doing this, the CPI also made it clear that it di not agree with the view that any demand for a new State or any autonomous region is a sccessions demand or at least necessarily a divisive one. fact, in the general discussion a view was expresso that to strengthen India's unity-in-diversity; national problems of the country need to be studied

in depth and in detail.

In the matter of organisation, the Party Congres laid great emphasis on the need of developing man organisations as really broad independent of functioning democratically instead of being reduce to sections of the CPI. A call was also given to wor for the unity of different classes and sections our people. It is to be hoped that other Left parts Africa. and groups will adopt a similar attitude. In mas organisations in which the Communists work, even those who differ with them politically but par cipate in common struggles along with them show feel at home. They should also be in a position get elected to leading positions.

The Commission on Organisation unanimous recommended one amendment to the Party Cons tution. There was difference of opinion with regard to the second one. Some delegates said that division must be avoided. This was countered by pointin Predom

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low wh integrity nent with A vote was taken. As other amendments ratic an came up for discussion, it became clear that some wanted a number of basic characters wanted a number of basic characters. delegates wanted a number of basic changes in the he and constitution while others held the view that not the that a structure but the method of functioning was the to top main thing. There were references to the need of decision examining the Constitution of the Party and its erests working in the light of debates going on in the interence the national communist movement since perestroika her the and glasnost began in the USSR. After some helps debate, it was decided that the question of amending in som the Party Constitution be left to the Extraordinary ed con Party Congress to be called to discuss amendments sentend to the Party Programme.

The fact that as many as 334 delegates were above Con 60 years of age caused justified concern. The number mocrat of those below the age of 35 was, only 132. The e Cents number of delegates of working class origin was I. Ot 138 and those of agricultural labour origin was 28 er would as against 13 of landlord class origin. Delegates of middle class origin were more than fifty per cent of assemble the total. Among the delegates there were 50 who as we had come from the Congress, 16 from CPI-M, 11 nce the from the Socialist Party, 34 from Left groups and

certain 11 from other regional parties.

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The CPI has about 395 district units while mbly the CPI has about 395 district units while administrative districts in India are about 430. strong It had 22,448 branches all over India in 1988.

As many as 46 fraternal delegations from outside Benche India attended the Calcutta Congress of the CPI. working Many of them spoke too. Interestingly, the deler police gation of the Communist Party of China got the seeking biggest applause. This was an expression of hapa ver piness at the re-establishment of party-to-party relations between the CPI and the CPC after many ss adop years and also at the fact that the split in the ion of international communist movement was being overcome. (Delegates to the CPI-M Congress at Trivanat it did drum had given the biggest applause to the Soviet or a new delegation expressing exactly the same sentiments.)

All fraternal delegations were given standing ovation. All were loudly cheered but the same were expresse Particularly loud in case of USSR, Vietnam, Cuba, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka as studie well as in case of delegations representing parties or organisations engaged in militant and armed

Congress struggles and those being persecuted.

Speeches were shorter than at the time of the previous Congresses but no less informative and

Politic out that unreal unanimity wou**Pisitrest** betreasthen Foundation Chennal and eGangotri that unreal unanimity wou**Pisitrest** betreasthen Foundation Chennal and eGangotri that unreal unanimity wou**Pisitrest** betreast between their was a feeling amonst some delegates that more time needs to be saved on this account so that more time is available for discussion of various problems facing the Party.

Unlike in the past, most of the speeches were free from usual "Marxist" jargon. In some speeches even the phrase Marxism-Leninism did not occur.

All in all, the presence of 46 fraternal delegations, their speeches (delivered or circulated) and the warm applause all of them got made the congress a grand demonstration of international solidarity of the working people and progressive forces. What this solidarity means or can mean is well illustrated by some of the things which the leader of the delegation of the Communist Party of Pakistan said.

Jam Saqi, who had spent years in Zia's jails and had suffered most gruesome torture, said (besides

I bring you greetings from that part of Indian sub-contiment which was part of India upto 1947 and which is now a separate country — Pakistan. ... As yet there has been only a partial transfer of power to the Benazir Bhuto Government ... Democracy is not yet consolidated in Pakistan . . . We have decided not to remain underground. We do hope that at least this much democracy will now be there in Pakistan despite the threats it still faces. . . The Pakistan Army is (still) helping Punjab terrorists. Punjab terrorists were recently found to be carrying a West German gun which was supplied for the Pakistan Army. Is that not a proof? ... Pakistan and the USA too must honour and honestly implement the Geneva Agreements regarding Afghanistan. We fully support the demand of the Government of Afghanistan that Afghanistan be admitted as a member of SAARC ...

This writer had the privilege of exchanging views at some length with Pieter Keuneman, Chairman of the Communist Party of Sri Lanka, regarding terrorism in Punjab and in Sri Lanka. Together with some essential and big differences, we noted a number of similarities. Referring to the latter, Comrade Keuneman said: "Those are there because the real masters of our terrorists and of your terrorists are

the same. Their aim is also the same."

Last but not the least, the rally in the Brigade Parade Ground on the March 12, 1989 was indeed very massive, heart-warming and inspiring. The police Commissioner estimated it to be 5 lakh strong. The Telegraph, a leading English daily of Calcutta, thought that it was 3.5 lakh strong. All conceded that it was much bigger than generally expected. Of course, a sizeable section consisted of those who had come from Bihar. Despite the hot weather, the rally was remarkably well-disciplined.

Shevardnadze: World Politics

(Contd. from page 5)

In ma Peninsula America, Kampuchea, in the Korean Acia and Cyprus. In me Peninsula, Central America, Kampuchea, in the Korona ork, even and And, of course, one cannot but emphasise the interpretations and restablishment of the universal character of the interpretations and restablishment of the universal character of the sphere of human interpretations and practices in the sphere of human rights, the recognition by states of the supremacy of law as a world-wide humanistic and democratic tendency in international relations.

These four tendencies are merging into a single which t tendencies are merging of the world's how which brings us to the realisation of the world's predominant unity and of its development under the

rests and common humanistic idea.

We seem to be approaching some kind of watershed in world politics, beyond which fundamental changes in our perceptions regarding the means of maintaining and handling international relations can take place.

I would like to draw attention to what is happening now around Afghanistan. Specifically, I have in mind the behaviour of Pakistan.

That country is the major participant of the Geneva Accords on Afghanistan. According to these documents, Islamabad has assumed concrete and predominant influence of common chymanistic ointer and to interfere in the Afghan affairs in any way.

MAINSTREAM April 8, 1989

not to supply arms to the opposition groups and not to allow the transit of arms through its territory, not to provide its territory as the base for the opposition forces, and not to allow them to act from Pakistan.

This obligation is openly and flagrantly violated. In fact, Islamabad has embarked on a road of an actual refusal from observing the obligations under the Accords, sanctified by the name and the authority

of the UN.

Any government should think twice before challenging the international community in such a way and before resorting to such a gross violation of the international law. Pakistan, on its part, should have thought about the consequences of its actions thrice, because it puts at stake too much - the reputation of the country, on whose word one could rely, as well as the future of its relations with the countries of the region.

Pakistan has quite a few big and complicated problems. By its defiant policies towards Afghanistan, it will only aggravate these problems, and will put

itself in an even more difficult position.

The present policy and actions of Pakistan running contrary to the Geneva Accords cannot but be the subject of serious concern to the international community, since they render a blow on the growing tendency towards political settlement of the regional conflict situations. I am confident that such definition of Pakistan's behaviour is winning support in the Indian society.

IF we want to save our civilisation, we all should learn to correlate national and group aspirations with the interests and values of entire humanity, try to understand each other and to comprehend the irreversible nature of the world's indivisibility. Only through joint efforts shall we be able to erect the storeys of a solid and universal home on our planet

comfortable for living.

In our view, the world on the threshold of the third millennium will be more dynamic, more demilitarised, more humane and more predictable. National security will be stronger, in a lesser degree based on "the balance of forces" and in a greater, degree on the "balance of interests" and on the freedom of choice. A comprehensive structure of an equipollent security will start to emerge. The role and efficiency of the UN will grow. Peaceful coexistence will acquire irreversible traits of "co-creativity" and "co-development", and the world, as a whole, will become more united and more internationalised. Inter-state relations will, in a much greater degree, be based on the norms of law and morality. The potential of the advanced science and technology will start to work for the benefit of the entire civilisation.

THE voice of the Non-Aligned Movement as the advocate of interests and as a collective exponent of the positions of 100 states of Asia, Africa, Latin America, Europe and the Oceania is distinctly heard in the international arena. And we are happy that as a rule this is the voice in support of the ideas of peace and international cooperation, disarmament and the prevention of war, of the free choice of

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGangotti the development of nations.

We support the aspiration of the Non-Alies Movement, under the new circumstances, not to preserve but to enhance its role in the wo arena as an independent political force. I can ass that the non-aligned countries will always have Soviet Union as a partner who respects the sta of non-alignment, its philosophy, its basic goals principles.

It gives me special pleasure to note that India a her prominent state figures stood at the roots of creation of this movement, which is so authoritati

today.

NOBODY is concealing the fact that the country of socialism in their development have encounter serious difficulties in economic and social sphere and are presently engaged in an intensive search unordinary, sometimes bold solutions to the accur lated problems.

One can put it like this: they are building the national homes in accordance with new drawings a blue-prints, making their architecture more diver fied and attractive. But this construction is guid by one general scheme to strengthen and impro

socialism.

The renovation of socialism in the Soviet Uni and the processes taking place in East Europe accompanied by their growing peace-making this ing, a more dynamic foreign policy activity aimed the removal of the threat of war and the promotion of international security, improvement of bilate and multilateral cooperation of socialist states in spheres.

THE concept of "blocks" has proved to be enduring one, and until now it is being actively cul vated by certain quarters, who continue to pla stakes on solving problems by means of exemple power pressure on their opponents. Unfortunalt this is the reality. But also the reality is that su an approach is more and more entering into com diction with the growing tendencies of both world and regional development. I have no do that the line of overcoming the confrontation blocks will eventually triumph, that the day come when the blocks will wither away as politic and military anachronisms.

IN the Soviet Union, India is regarded as a reliant partner in solving the major task facing manks today - to promote peace, security, development the present and future generations of people. Al the stages of the movement towards a new wo order which is being formed before our eyes, Soviet Union and India work in solidarity jointly seek approaches to the improvement of international situation. This factor is invariably powerfully acting for the benefit of a universal co sensus on the global problems of today.

The Delhi Declaration signed by M.S. Gorbook and R. Gandhi is an outstanding document of epoch. It is only natural that the USSR and lo are its authors, whose cooperation has long been major factor of international stability and peace.

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Police Courtesy!

MRINAL PANDE

ONCE upon a time (some five years ago) the Delhi traffic police gave long, almost lyrical directions to the traffic surging down Tilak Marg, towards Bahadurshah Zafar Marg and ITO. That was also the time when Rajpath had its own grinning dancing traffic constable, striking classical mudras cheerfully, as he blocked or waved the vehicle on.

January No more. On Twentythird, the day of the Republic Day rehearsals, I was making desperate efforts to cut through to my office on Kasturba Gandhi Marg, around noon. Chased away from various openings, I joined the long queue of cars inching down Barakhamba Road. As I was making a hesitant left turn, to cut through the back alleys, a furious policeman almost clubbed me down inside

my little vehicle. "Chalo! Chalo! (move on)" - he hissed behind clenched teeth.

'Bhai, can you tell me how to get to work, my offices are on Curzon Road, that is—" I began weakly.

'Chal!" he hissed turning purple and banging furiously on my door. I could not help noticing that there were no nouns or pronouns (not even relative ones) or articles in his act of waving me on, only a verb and a sign of exclamation. I still pretended to fidget with the controls, borrowing speech and time: "You see, I am a working journalist and I work in The Hindustan Times and we release the form -'

He cut me short this time with a wordless thump on the roof of the car that shook the whole street. Even those irate motorists behind me forgot to toot for a while.

I had no choice but to move on. And so I moved on, musing on the correlation between the increasing wordlessness and physical assertion of the traffic wardens on our streets; in direct proportion to the increase in chaotic traffic on the roads of the city.

The greater the confusion and the rush, the greater their power and authority, and the lesser the need for words, friends frequently suggested.

But could it be, I thought to myself as I inched on, that the greater the desirability of avoiding coherent answers, the bigger the silent show of muscles for waving people on? To hear a question out usually necessitates an answer. What answer is there today to terrorism, to security for few that leads to dangerous traffic snarls for all others, to power break-downs, to indeed a host of questions that seventy million people want to stop by and ask against the daily debasement of their lives on roads their taxmoney has built?

Each time we pause in our tracks and open our mouths, we are waved on and on and on, and to stop and demand a dialogue becomes a dangerous act of opposition, of even sabotage, to be quashed down with a thump of the baton.

If only everyone moved on, says the whistle, there would be no problems. And no speech.

Mujtaba: Satanic Verses

(Contd. from page 6) more political overtones than religious pain.

In Pakistan too Kausar Niazi, the person who engineered the riots, had his own political axe to grind and used this opportunity to successfully promote himself out of political considerations. In England the riots had more racial underpinning than religious discontent. In a society which is torn between different races whose economic base is politic shrinking, competition is at its height and opportunities to excell are few. Such a situation results in outburst of an are few. Outburst of anger and contempt against the state. Here Asian Muslims have defied themselves to submerge their identity in Western life-style and have used this ploy as pressure tactics to assert themselves for racial adjustment.

In case of Iran which waited so long for the book to be released in the United States of America to react has its Ayatollah's death-decree is designed to project himself as the Lenin of Islamic fundamentalism and Iran as the citadel of this revolution. Right since 1979 lran remains of this revolution. rsal co Iran remains isolated from the world, having failed to carve to carve out its niche in the world, naving and unable its niche in the world political order and unable to transport revolution beyond its frontiers. With the transport revolution beyond the shot back into tiers. With this move it has once again shot back into It has touched the delicate chord of the

followers of the faith to rise against the monarchs of West Asia who have mortgaged their country to the West for economic exploitation. In the Islamic world Khomeni has scored over the so called champions of the faith by rendering them spineless. As far as the domestic policy is concerned, the Ayatollah has once again cushioned himself in power by silencing his opposition to make any claim for rivalry. Finally, in the duel for the post of 'Mr Controversial' he has knocked out Rushdie to push himself on the victory stand.

In the course of this analysis we see that at the abstract level there is an ideological deadlock. At the sociological level religion still remains master of the society rather than its loving companion. At the behavioural level religion is used as a smokescreen behind which there is the murky game of power-politics. Finally, England's reconciliatory mood with Iran and Margaret Thatcher's strong objection towards the book shows that the lure of the economic package which Iran offers in its portwar reconstruction programme to the European Economic Community takes precedence over other considerations. This is an indicator of the Western societies' value-system. Materialism still remains supreme there and all noble virtues expressed now and them are of mere rhetorical importance bereft of any backup action.

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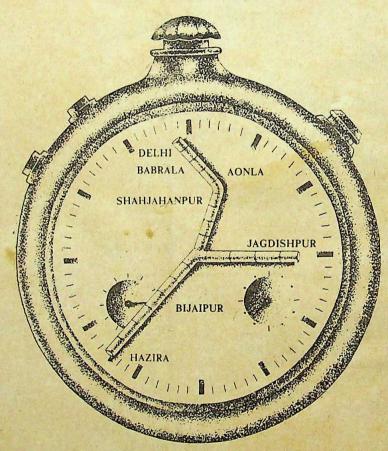
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Saturday April 15, 1989

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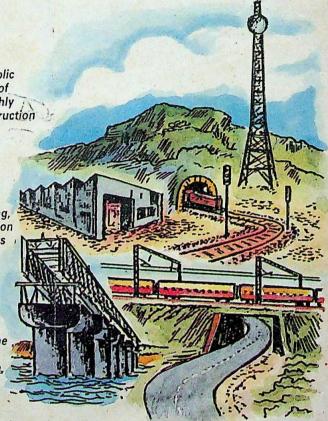
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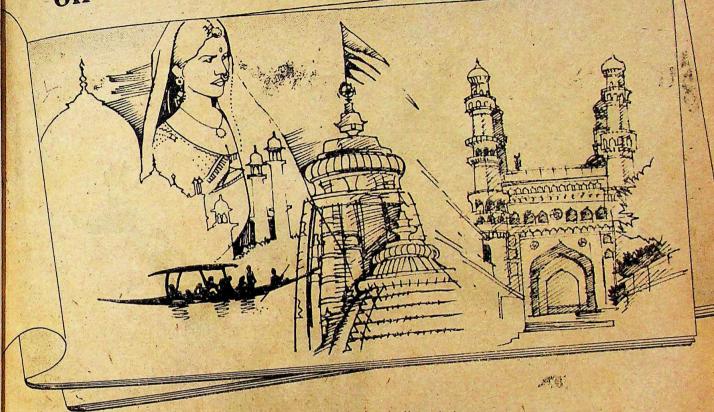
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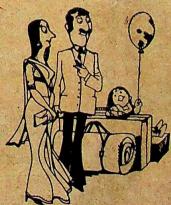
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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Distress Signal

THE Prime Minister's 45-minute oration in the Lok Sabha on April 10 hardly threw any light on the ambiguities of his Government's

stand on the Thakkar Commission Report.

Many of the questions raised since the release of the Interim and the Final Reports of the Commission-questions which were not only posed by the critics but bothered the supporters of the ruling party were not even touched by the Prime Minister, though the advance notice of the speech promised the full story and nothing but the full. The evaluation of the Thakkar Report, the wisdom of appointing him, even hindsight wisdom; the inadequacy of the coverage by the Commission; the strange overlapping of the Commission's work with that of the Special Investigation Team-one judicial and the other police; the acceptance of the Thakkar Report by the Government and later rejection of its main thrust on the strength of the police investigation — all these were dealt with neither by the Prime Minister nor by his Home Minister.

A very serious point in the Indira assassination case was the fact that her assailants were sought to be promptly bumped off — at least one of them, Beant Singh, was killed while the other one, Satwant Singh, was meant to be killed but revived after being badly wounded. Such killing off of actual assailants by unknown hands is a common feature in many a case of political assassination, from Pakistan Prime Minister Liagat Ali Khan to American President Kennedy. The object of such prompt killing of the assailants has always been to cover up all investigation into their roots. In the case of Indira Gandhi, it was known that Beant and Satwant were promptly shot at by ITBP personnel posted nearby. Justice Thakkar makes only a passing, reference to this serious development - and that too tucked in as an afterthought. There is no knowing whether the Anandram-led SIT has examined this mysterious aspect of the case, and the public has a right to know of the results. It is amazing that the Prime Minister, with his exuberant eloquence on Indira's assassination, makes no mention whatsoever of this serious incident which might provide the clue to the conspiracy that he has been talking about in such a highfalutin tone. Anyone determined to make a thorough investigation into that bloody crime can hardly ignore Although a Congress-I MP has raised the question in public, there is deafening silence from the Government side on this score.

There are other equivocations in the Prime Minister's speech. He has said that Justice Thakkar "himself asked that his Report be kept secret". Actually, the judge has said in the Final Report itself that "there is no objection to the Interim Report being made public" his reservation was mainly about the publication of the Final Report. More serious is the Prime Minister's failure (or reluctance?) to disclose how the SIT has absolved Dhawan, whether every specific point raised by Justice Thakkar was met by the SIT. If so, has not the public the right to know about it - particularly when the allegations against Dhawan in the Thakkar Report have been made public? In terms of admissibility of any report, is not the Government setting up a strange standard by which a police team's report carries more weight with the Government than a Supreme Court judge's even when the Government had accepted the judge's report?

HOWEVER, Rajiv Gandhi, it seems, made that hi-fi oration not to clarify, nor to answer doubts and misgivings. His purpose has been different. And it is here that one has to complement Four Matisn Chengaland e Gingotourse, nobody his speech-writers who have done a super job. Not only the script-writers but he too deserves kudos for a perfectly rehearsed delivery. For, the main objective -more precisely, the sole objective - of Rajiv's Lok Sabha performance on April 10 was to begin his election campaign. It was not meant to be a cogent contribution to a serious discussion on a very serious subject before the Parliament of India, but the beating of the war-drum for the coming battle for the ballot. It was meant mainly to boost the sagging morale of his own Congress-I flock. They are in a state of utter confusion: so, the leader has given the call for the Action Station.

From the first indications in Rajiv's March 17 statement conceding the demand for the release of the Thakkar Report, then on to the angry shrieks at the NSUI convention, on to the Calcutta speech and now the magnum tub-thumping in the Lok Sabha on April 10 — one gets a fairly clear view of the election campaign line of the Rajiv establishment.

What are going to be the highlights of Rajiv's election propaganda? First, his party is the party of Gandhi, Nehru and Indira and, therefore, has the monopoly of patriotism.

Secondly, Indira left a legacy of democracy, secularism, nationalism, self-reliance, stability and patriotism. And Indira was my mother and myself her son. So, I inherit all these as of right — a sort of hereditary divine right, and primogeniture too.

Thirdly, the Opposition is linked to terrorists and secessionists. Not only Jethmalani but Jyoti Basu too is a harbourer of secessionists as one of the Rajiv lackeys - a mini-Minister at that in the proximity of the leader the other day in

the uncomfortable fact that it was Rajiv who had given testimonial to Bhindranwale as a mere religious leader when he had actually been inciting Khalistani

secessionism by openly advocating terrorism.

Fourthly, the grand conspiracy that is about to open - a bigger, Mark Two show than the one last year — willbrine out the shocking design of India's enemies, and in this Pakistan will be included, since the present establishment seems to believe that the spectre of Pakistan is still a votedevice in this country. Incidentally, this poll compulsion at home is making a mess of our foreign policy approach, which today is committed to a positively friendly policy towards Pakistan. It is a telling commentary on the functioning of the Government that Minister Chidambaram chose to talk patronisingly in Parliament about the internal set-up in Pakistan which is totally at variance with the Foreign Office stand committed to building bridges with Pakistan. This junior Home Minister's theorising on Pakistan is understood to have been without the knowledge and consent of the Foreign Minister.

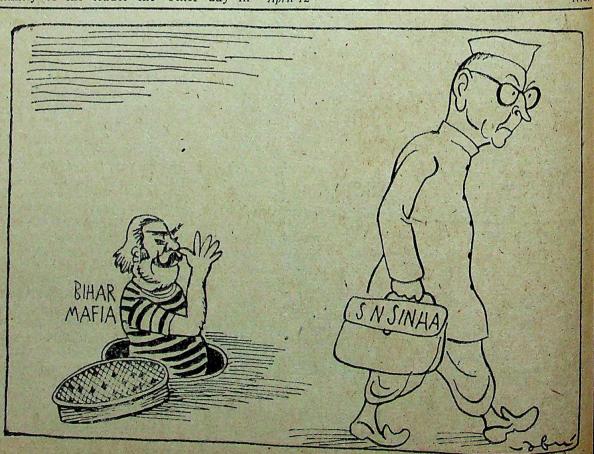
Looking at the state of the Congress-I party under Rajiv one is at a loss to speculate about its victory in the general elections. Even its fellow-travelling observers are finding it difficult to push its poll score up to the majority point. fact, the party is more in disarray today than at the time of the prestigious Allahabad by-election ten months ago, which marked the starting point of its rapid decline. The induction of Dhawan into the Government was supposed to strengthen the party apparatus. In effect, Dhawan's re-entry has sharpened the differences within the Congress-I party, as his allies are enthused while his adversaries are embittered Bickerings and back-biting have gone up - certainly no sign of party consolidation.

As an eminent person remarked, Indira fought and won an election with the call of Garibi Hatao; Rajiv has now taken up the call of Traitor Hatao. What is pathetic about it is the assumption that the voter is gullible. Such a high voltage emotional exercise is already four years old. Indira dead cannot carry his son to poll victory through a repeat funeral.

All in all, this is no clarion call by a confident leader but

the shrill distress signal of a crumbling establishment. April 12

POSTSCRIPT by ABI



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COMMENTARY

Counter-productive

INDIA has for long pursued a policy in our region based on the consideration that regardless of the character of the the consider of the regimes in our neighbourhood and their activities in relation to us it would do nothing to cause hardship to the peoples of our neighbouring states. It is thus distressing to note the our neighbournes that India is pursuing vis-a-vis Nepal at

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N.C.

If the royal family there has been taking a line intended to appease China and needle India and even adopt steps impinging on our security, New Delhi would have been perfectly justified in firmly conveying to the ruling monarchy. the serious consequences of such actions. But at the same time care and caution were imperative to preclude the possibility of the Nepalese ruling circles internationalising the issue on one side and prevent the subjection of the Nepalese public to difficulties and problems on the other.

Unfortunately the Government of India's dismal failure on both these counts has revealed once again its inability to conduct effective diplomacy. This is eloquently conveyed through the propaganda mileage that Nepal, and the Nepalese media in particular, derived from New Delhi's decision to give a taste of its "equal" instead of "special" relationship with Kathmandu — a move which exposed it to the charge of imposing an "economic blockade" on account of its "expan-

sionist" ambitions. This feeling has currently become wide-spread in Nepal and even those democratic forces sympathetic to India are facing an uphill task countering such a view

But above all, supreme value needs to be attached to the human question, the suffering which the people of Nepal are presently undergoing due to paucity of kerosene and other essential commodities following the Indian action upon the expiry of the trade and transit agreements between the two

countries on March 26, 1989.

Objective commentaries have presented the viewpoints of both Nepal and India on the issue and it is not difficult to comprehend the sensitivities of both the countries. India's has legitimately been enhanced acquisition of Chinese anti-aircraft guns and missiles for use in the Terai area (which action cannot be described as friendly by any stretch of imagination). But how can one possibly object to Nepal's urge to demonstrate its own policy-perspective independent of India? That is why what was necessary was an effective and convincing rebuttal of the Nepalese position in a way that reinforced trust in bilateral relations and did not antagonise the Nepalese public. The actual step taken has, from all available indications, been counter-productive bringing grist to the mill of the anti-India forces in the Himalayan kingdom.

That step needs to be reversed at the earliest. not too late. Loss of goodwill of the people of Nepal would be a big blow to India's stature in South Asia as the world's largest democracy. Efforts to preserve that goodwill

thus assume overriding importance.

India must on its own take the initiative to defuse the crisis. The wisdom of stooping to conquer is of special significance in the context of our ties with Nepal.

April 12

S.C.

TRIBUTE

A Great Painter of Rural India

TUSHAR BHATT

PANNALAL PATEL, one of the tallest figures in the contemporary Gujarati literature, who passed away in Ahmedabad on April 6 at the age of 77, was a miracle in the world of literature.

A man who had studied only upto to eighth standard, who had worked in a variety of jobs from farming to an oilman in an electricity company, he was once hailed by his life-long friend and another titan of Gujarati literature, Umashankar Joshi, as

"no less a writer than Shakespeare" In truth, Pannalal was in many ways like Maxim Gorky. He too had graduated from the University of Life, had portrayed life around him powerfully, graphically and simply beautifully. His writings did not spring from inter-action with the world literature, or from the urban drawing rooms where phoney psychological wars bearing little relationship with the "real" life endlessly take place in the modernday prose. Man was at the centre of the best that was ever produced by Pannalal and yet it was no fanciful flight. fanciful flight of imagination in individualism divorced from the ed from the contemporary society around him. In the struggles of ordinary people he portrayed, Pannalal never came never came out as an escapist. "Man," he once said, is not evil as such; hunger is. And a worse evil than poverty is hearing." poverty is begging.

Pannalai's characters were intensely human, drawn from the rural world of North Gujarat, his native area. area, speaking in their language, reflecting their hopes feeding in their language, reflecting of hopes, fears and frustrations, but never despairing of being alive. His reputation as a wordsmith largely remained confined to Gujarat, although he did come into limelight briefly some three years ago when he got the Jnanpith award for 1985 for one of his greatest novels. Manvini Bhavai. That there was little awareness in the rest of the country underlined the tragedy of the contemporary Indian literary scene as well - a man must know English, or at least should have been advertised widely in that language to be recognised in areas whose mothertongue is different from his own. To his credit, Pannalal was never bothered by this lack of appreciation outside the world of Gujaratis; he gladly accepted whatever recognition came his way, but never grieved that enough had never come.

For some years now, Pannalal's health had been failing. He had gone deaf, and age seemed to be catching up faster than with other people, clearly a result of a harsh childhood and youth. The last time I met him was at his home in Ahmedabad in mid-1986 soon after the Jnanpith Award for 1985 was announced for his epic novel Manvini Bhavai. It was an unusual interview since questions had to be put to the writer on a piece of paper, and he would reply into a tape-recorder. Though ravages of age were showing up, the sparkle in his eyes had not dimmed. With his characteristic candour, Pannalal spoke of the award: "When I first heard of the award for my work, I momentarily had an inexplicable feeling of having been exposed."

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It was a coincidence that he became the second his Village and Fean dotto Gujarati writer to bag the Jnanpith award, the first having been given to his childhood friend, Umashankar Joshi. A staunch follower of Sri Aurobindo and Sri Mataji of Pondicherry, Pannalal was a man without any ego. Years ago he had noted: "Life appears to me like that of a spider who makes his own web, using his own saliva. The spider progresses through life on the strength of the strands of his own web. I, too, have gone about in this world, finding my own ways, learning and changing. What I know of life has come from experience.'

And yet, he was too modest to take all the credit for his creativity. "I regard everything in my life as a miracle. I generally don't do things after a great deal of thought, but more from intuition or my understanding of life around me at that moment" The brief, which may be regarded as something of an unscientific conclusion, sprang from Pannalal's own evolution as a writer: It had been something of a miracle; or how can one explain the literary creativity of a man who had studied only up to Class VIII,

he would ask.

Lack of formal education was amply compensated in Pannalal by an observant eye and a natural feel for words. He was a born story-teller. His most forceful prose came in the early years of his writing career, which he began some 48 years ago. Pannalal, it would appear, had also the tenacity of a spider, an unshakable self-confidence in his ability to find

his metier and grow.

Pannalal was born on May 7, 1912, at Mandli village, now in Rajasthan, in the family of Nanalal Patel, a farmer with literary leanings. Nanalal used to recite Ramayana, Okhaharan and other mythological stories for the villagers of Mandli, which earned the nickname of Vidyanu Ghar (abode of learning) for his house among the simple folks. Nanalal died when Pannalal was still a child, and Pannalal's mother took up the responsibility of raising the children. Young Pannalal was always very close to his mother, so much so that his later day devotion to Sri Mataji of Pondicherry was seen by some as a manifestation of his search for the motherimage. Pannalal's education progressed with great difficulty because of the poor family circumstances. Depending on the help of others, he managed to go upto the Eighth Standard. During the school days, he came in touch with Umashankar Joshi, who too was a student at the school in Idar.

Pannalal's youth was spent in uncertainty and hardship and he worked as a clerk in a mill-gin store in Ahmedabod for a while, then as an oilman in the Ahmedabad Electricity Co. He tried his hand at agriculture too. By the time Pannalal was 25, he had seen quite a bit of rural life, imbibing a variety of rich experience. In the 1930s, he joined the Gandhian movement as a representative of farmers

from the Dungarpur area.

The year 1936 was a turning point in Pannalal's Umashankar had come to Ahmedabad from Bombay to attend a conference of the Gujarati Sahitya Parishad and met his student-day friend. He listened to Pannalal's woes and advised him to begin writing. Umashankar entrusted

another of his Pannalal tried writing poetry poet Sundaram. for a while and gave it up in favour of prose. beginning with short stories. Shethni Sharda, his first story was published in the hulchhab journal Soon Pannalal started writing profusely, as if the rich haul of experiences of life was waiting impatiently to be transformed into words. His first novel was Bhiru Sathi, but his first published novellette was Valamana (Farewell), published in 1940. It was a straight-forward, honest portrayal of the rural areas from where Pannalal hailed, and enthused the noted Gujarati writer, the late Zaverchand Meghani, to ask Pannalal to write a special work for his Phulchhab journal. The outcome was Malela Jiv.

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written in just 20 days.

Circumstances forced Pannalal to go back to Mandli for farming, but he soon shifted to Bombay and to filmdom. During his stay in Bombay, he wrote novels such as Yauvan and Surabhi, about life in the city. But his forte remained the rural scene. Around the time of Independence came Pannalal's greatest work, Manvini Bhavai, penned partly in the impoverished village house in Mandli and partly at his farm, where Pannalal grew maize. The novel evoked tremendous response from readers who were stirred by its dual qualities — realism, powerfully expressed in memorable word pictures of village life, and emotional characterisation of the people in the story. The novel has come to be regarded as on par with Saraswatichandra the first Gujarati novel ever written, by Govardhanram. Manvini Bhavai was a forceful portrayal of life in a village, written more than 40 years ago, against the setting of a terrible famine. It was the story of an indomitable man facing the severe calamity:

Soon after 1947, Pannalal contracted tuberculosis. He was taken to Bombay and then to Panchgani for treatment. Manvini Bhavai was, in fact, published when its author was helplessly bed-ridden. His friend, poet Sundaram, a follower of Sri Aurobindo, sent him the blessings of Sri Mataji. Pannalal reco vered, with a firm belief that he had got a new life because of Sri Aurobindo and Mataji. In 1958, 10 shifted to Ahmedabad for good, writing at a prolific rate. In 1971, along with his two sons, Pannalal started a publishing venture of his, Sadhna.

Patel has to his credit nearly 80 volumes. In 1950, he was given the prestigious Ranjitram Gold Medal. Several of his works have been given State honours In recent years, an ageing Pannalal had taken to writing on mythological themes. His association with the philosophy of Sri Aurobindo removed him far from the Pannalal of Mandli village. Neverthe less, Manvini Bhavai marked the peak of his writing His natural flair for writing, his rustic settings, his ability to portray the village life and scenes, and the minds of his characters, have all contributed to making him a modern master in Gujarati. He would be remembered for opening up the vast kaler doscope of the richness of life in our villages.

Pannalal is gone, but there are still innumerable themes, subjects, scenes, settings and struggles ordinary people waiting to be depicted. He was chronicler par excellence of rural society.

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YUGOSLAV PERSPECTIVE

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Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe

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Yugoslavia is a part of Europe and that is an over-riding reason for its intensive and continuous interest in what kind of peace, security and order is prevailing in Europe. There is no doubt that it is among those who want Europe to be pluralistic, democratic, free and undivided. A Europe that would mean better life, more productive work and freedom in its many facets for the peoples of Europe. This has been our vision for a long time and this has been the frame of our thinking and action. The cold war and its consequences made it difficult to bring about meaningful results in this sense since the tight controls of the cold war have made the space for such action limited to the extreme.

At the inception of the process for the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) Yugoslavia understood the numerous advantages of its democratic and all-European framework and has contributed fully and creatively to the development

of this process from Helsinki to Vienna.

In the development and enhancement of the CSCE process we perceived the construction of a new all-European building on the ruins left in the wake of the Second World War and after consequences of the cold war would be weeded out. A building in which all would feel more free and the voices of reason would be heard clearly above the deafening din of arms hardware.

The CSCE was perceived as the right instrument the resolution of the main problems of Europe. The CSCE was imagined to be a laboratory to create the atmosphere which would make possible better articulation of individual interests and common

interest would be easier to identify.

This is the potential that has been attracting Yugoslavia to the CSCE and makes it an ardent, constructive and long term advocate of this Conference.

It is a maxim of the policy of non-alignment that peace and security will have a better chance with diminishing division and barriers, indeed in a process of overcoming them. To overcome them in Europe is a difficult, momentous job.

The divisions in Europe are, historically speaking, not a phenomenon of modern times, they were around and enforced, particularly the religious ones in a myriad of unacceptable ways through the ages. But the divisions the peoples of Europe had to put up with in the last 40 odd years are covering many

The author is the Head of the Yugoslav delegation to the Conference on Security and Cooperasador Europe, and the former Yugoslav Ambassador to the UN.

and a growing number of areas of human endeavour. It would be wrong for Europe to get used to them and tolerate them as more or less permanent fixtures. True, some of them—like the ones based on ideological antagonisms and warlike confrontations - have shown some sign of abating. However, new ones are being instituted, old ones are being beefed up, making them awesome and long term.

Due to its method of work and decision-making with consensus as the paramount and singular rule, the CSCE is a non-bloc institution. The term 'nonbloc' is used here on purpose since the bloc way of harmonising the positions and actions among members of political, military and economic entities is a European reality clearly felt in the CSCE and one

that will not disappear easily or soon.

However, particular value in the CSCE is attached to the democratically agreed and relentless activity of neutral and non-aligned countries. They are proceeding from their own authentic interests and they are successfully identifying the all-European interest in all fields under the CSCE. This is facilitated by the fact that the interest of the neutral and the non-aligned is more often than not very similar, if not identical, with the all-European interest.

The contribution of the neutral and non-aligned (NNA) countries is manifold. It invites a serious and extensive study and analysis of its history of very nearly two decades. However, it is essential to note that neutral and non-aligned countries act on the strength of their arguments, realistic assessment and politically since they do not have any other leverage at their hands. It is with this gear alone that they carry the day and not by presenting themselves as the third or fourth group of countries at the CSCE conference table (the three in descending order of manifesting a unified approach are the 12 of the European Community the 16 of the NATO and France, the seven of the Warsaw Treaty). Wisely the NNA have no intention to ostentatiously present themselves as a group since they would emphasise the divisions against which they have been all along.

Contemplating the subject of divisions and barriers one cannot but behold the developments on the economic scene. A dozen countries that are encompassing the better part of prosperous and propulsive part of the European economically " economy are bringing down the economic barriers among them. If this is going to be accompanied by maintaining and enhancing barriers facing other European countries the concept of a common Europe would be nothing but an empty intellectual argument and a thin-walled shell of desire. At the security and prosperity of a closed integration may very well come to know that security and prosperity are not durable unless they equally apply to your

neighbours.

There is no way to argue that science and technology are not of universal value. However, this value is to a great extent a secret kept under seven seals and this is not only in case of the one pertaining to military but in areas entirely anodine in the military sense and linked to the quality of life of the people. So the high quality achievements that could and should be the vehicle for progress for all are used for domination by a few, not always, but all too often.

The best environment for the growth of science and technology is the free interaction of experience, discovery and practical application. However, secrecy still rules too many of these horizons and makes joint research projects and systems of use exceeding-

ly difficult to materialise.

It is no easy task to overcome old existing barriers and cut short the growth of new ones, the roots are deep and suspicions are not shed easily. Many may agree that it is absurd from the economic, financial and even cultural vantage point that in a geographically not particularly large area, such as Europe, there exist mainly incompatible information and TV systems, and different standards in industry and commerce (the prospects of cooperation are particularly dim where there are no standards at all).

Any joint step, project or programme in such a situation is particularly precious. In this light the CSCE is there to be used and in this sense Yugoslavia has so convincingly supported the to hold an European economic conference and an European scientific forum. Regrettably, either of them have not earned enthusiastic support, but both of them should have an agenda that would look towards the future and not deal only with the complaints of the past.

Differences over the attitudes toward some basic values, like human rights, are accompanied by divides in the field of culture, education or simply in the

opinion-forming processes.

Differences in these, as well as in other fields, are not pernicious per se. They would seem to be justified as much as necessary if they are due to freedom of choice and maintaining and safeguarding

traditions meaningful to the peoples.

However, the true and intrinsic value of divergences is not a valid argument in favour of and an excuse for keeping intact old and creating new divides that are making cross-fertilisation impossible. The claim that this would have an adverse infectious effect is neither realistic nor forward looking.

Internationally sanctioned efforts are needed in order to provide safeguards for the cultural heritage of peoples with less widely spoken languages and their right to enjoy and further develop their cultural heritage. Free flow of culture does not mean the opening of the floodgates of domination or open season on the small but a democratic relationship with breathing space for all. And then again, it is difficult, to leave out some European countries in Europe and the number of those difficult to enter is

end of the day those who were girled byto y dischast round a formation of culture and prosperity of a closed integration may introduce and cultivate the free flow of culture and ensure the blooming of the cultural areas of the large and the small giving the achievements of civil lisation a free-play.

documents of the past and those The CSCE being elaborated at the Vienna meeting are here to be applied and should be applied for the well-being of all. This would surely bring about the scaling down of divides in the humanitarian field and in the area of culture and may be a beginning of a com. mon European market of culture. It may usher in cultural exchanges not regulated by costly and bureaucratised programmes imposing patterns and

stifling ideas.

The CSCE has yet unfathomed potential for the building of a peaceful and secure order in Europe. The CSCE has largely developed as a project to remove the threat to peace in Europe, the threat that hung over Europe for the better part of the post-war era. It was designed to ultimately free Europe of bloc division and to maintain stability, to deny the possibility of remaking the territorial boundaries. In this sense, it is of essential importance that the Final Act of the 1975 Helsinki Conference reaffirmed the inviolability of the existing boundaries in Europe, allowing only for their peaceful and agreed change.

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Inviolability of the existing boundaries is one of the elements of the Final Act and inter alia stresses the non-use of force in all spheres "of international life. According to the Final Act, this can be achieved only by respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states, non-interference in the internal affairs, as well as cooperation and measures to strengthen mutual trust, disarmament and peaceful

solution of disputes.

It testifies to the sagacity of the founders of the CSCE that they did not gloss over the differences of interest and the existence of problems in international relations. They, the founders, have rather set the framework for their solution. The CSCE is not designed to solve, and should not try its hand in solving, bilateral problems. It is meant to work out the framework and the atmosphere conducive for a

better and more efficacious solution. To breed an atmosphere of mutual trust in Europe is not facile and no one is given to the idea that the problems are about to be resolved by themselves. In a climate of more liberty it is likely that some bilateral problems that appeared to be forgotten of have been kept in deep freeze on account of bloc of other discipline will surface with fury. While this hard to avoid in all potential cases, it is essential that the solution of bilateral problems may attempted in an international atmosphere conducivo to these efforts. Putting problems back into deep freeze may not be feasible at all and would certainly not be helpful. The CSCE will not solve these problems but it is an instrument that will testify to the goodwill of the parties and nudge them along the

The CSCE is a living example of the application of the principle that security is the business of all

(Continued on page 60)

Ambedkar on Constitution and National Integration

BASANT KUMAR MALLIK

On the occasion of the 98th birth anniversary of Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar on April 14, 1989 a research article of the author, Lecturer in History, S.C.S. College, Puri (Orissa) is being carried here. — Editor.

Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar was one of the very few Indian statesmen-politicians who actively participated in the discussions on Constitutional matters from the Montford reforms (1919) to the

Cabinet Mission (1946) proposals.

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He was the first and foremost leader of the depressed classes, and the struggle of the depressed classes for human rights and socio-political equality from the twenties to the fifties of the twentieth century is woven round this name. Being elected Chairman of the Drafting Committee, Dr Ambedkar played a key role in viewing the structure of the government and the form of the Constitution. It is worthwhile to discuss his philosophy on Indian Constitution and his contribution to national integration as well.

The Round Table Conference was a landmark in the history of the In dian Constitution. Being invited to discuss on constitutional matters Dr Ambedkar demanded independence and hoped that the people of India would be able to redress their grievances by political power and this political power will come to them only under the swaraj Constitution. According to him, the bureaucratic form of government in India should be replaced by a government which will be a government of the people, by the people and for the people. By the change of government he did not mean only the change of masters. He advocated for a government which was a responsible government formed by the representatives of the people.1 Dr Ambedkar did not want to impose a Constitution on the Indians, but he submitted that the opinion of the people about the manner in which they desired to be governed must be accepted. Thus he observed at the

The time when you were to choose and India was to accept is gone, never to return. Let the consent of the people and not the accident of logic be the touchstone of your new Constitution, if you desire that it should be worked.²

In the Constituent Assembly Dr Ambedkar played a very significant role with a lofty responsibility of drafting the Constitution. He examined the functioning of a democratic government on the basis of stability and responsibility. However, in the Draft Constitution he recommended that the parliamentary system of executive must have more responsibility to stability. As regards the character of the Constitution, it was "federal in form and unitary in spirit". Centre and the States at the periphery, each endowed assigned to them respectively by the Constitution. Ambedkar said that the Indian federation was not

a League of States nor are the States administrative units or agencies of the Union Government.⁴ His view of federal States associated great importance to institutional means for the solution of human affairs. His concept of federalism meant that the State was a federation in normalcy, but unitary in emergency.⁵

In the Draft Constitution Dr Ambedkar offered more power to the Centre and made it strong. Some members of the Constituent Assembly criticised him on the ground that since Dr Ambedkar postulated the rights and values of each individual and the development of each province and each village, it was contradictory on his part to make the Centre strong. Justifying the provisions for a strong Central authority Dr Ambedkar said that he made the centre strong not only to "save minorities from the misrule of majority" but also "for it is only the Centre which can work for a common end and for the general interests of the country as a whole".

In the Draft Constitution the 'fundamental rights' prescribed were justiciable in the court of law. Of all the rights, Dr Ambedkar observed 'equality of opportunity' as the most important right. Regarding the constitutional remedies, he characterised Article 32 as the very soul of the Constitution and the very heart of it. To him, fundamental rights would mean establishment of equality and liberty in order to reform our social system, which is so full of inequalities, discriminations and other which conflict with

our fundamental rights.9

The Directive Principles of State Policy contained the positive obligations of the state towards its citizens. The Directives were meant to ensure social and economic democracy which was secured by the provisions of fundamental rights in a written Constitution. Dr Ambedkar said:

What are called Directive Principles is merely another name for Instruments of instructions to the legislature and the executive ... as to how they should exercise their

power.1

Under the Draft Constitution the President occupied the same position as the King under the English Constitution. He was the head of the state but not of the executive. He represented the nation but did not rule the nation. He was the symbol of the nation. His place in the administration was that of a ceremonial device on a seal by which the nation's decisions were made known. The whole Cabinet system was based on collective responsibility. It could be achieved only through the instrumentality of Prime Minister.

The Constitution is a dynamic document. It

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should suit the changing needs and circumstances. So Dr Ambedkar urged the necessity of amendments. He remarked:

The Draft Constitution has eliminated the elaborate and difficult procedures such as a decision by a convention or a referendum. The power of amendment lies with the

legislatures, central and provincial...11.

Dr Ambedkar was doubtful on the constitutional mortality of the legislatures. So he wanted to incorporate the forms of administration in the Constitution. He said:

Democrary in India is a top-dressing on an Indian soil, which is essentially undemocratic. In these circumstances it is wiser not to trust the legislature to prescribe the form of administration. This is the justification for incorporating them in the Constitution.¹²

Dr Ambedkar was paid rich tributes for his zealous and ardous task of piloting the Constitution of free India. Praise was showered on him. Many eminent members of the Constituent Assembly described him as the Modern Manu for giving a constitution as per the suitability of modern times. In the words of an eminent constitutionalist Dr M.V. Pylee:

Ambedkar brought to bear upon his task a vast array of qualities, erudition, scholarship, imagination, logic and eloquence and experience. Whenever he spoke in the House usually to reply to the criticisms advanced against provisions to the Draft Constitution, there emerged a clear and lucid exposition of the provisions of the Constitution. As he sat down, the mist of doubts vanished as also the clouds of confusion and vagueness. Indeed, he was a Modern Manu and deserved to be called the father or the chief architect of the Constitution of India.13

Besides the drafting of the Constitution. Dr Ambedkar's contribution to national integration is worth analysing. He said so long as we are divided into five thousand castes, we were not a nation. The sooner we realised that we were not a nation; would we try to become a nation. Caste and creed were hindrances to our national unity. So first of all they should be rooted out and then only national integrity was possible. Thus Dr Ambedkar thought that social revolution was the only stepping-stone towards

national integration.

In the Constituent Assembly Dr Ambedkar urged the fundamental unity of India. It looked as though he had undergone a political conversion. In fact, he had turned into a champion of national freedom and democratic advance,14 a patriot second to none. Speaking on the 'Objective Resolution' Dr Ambedkar said he was quite convinced that given time and circumstances nothing in the world could prevent this country from becoming one of the major powers. Regarding the Muslim agitation he said: "I have no hesitation in saying that notwithstanding the agitation of the Muslim League for the partition of India some day enough light would dawn upon the Muslims themselves and they too will begin to think that a united India is better even for them."15 The prediction of Ambedkar on this score was quite

On the eve of independence some princely States. did not wish to join with the Indian Union. Speak-

should grow with the growth Dightized by Anyti Sanan Hounday or the has angesting Dr Ambedkar said that the States could not have an existence apart from the Indian Union. He asked the Interim Government to notify to the British Government that the people of India would never recognise any Indian State as a sovereign Indian State. The people of India had declared themselves for the Union. That decision must be given effect to immediately.16 He also strongly urged upon the Hyderabad State and Travancore to join the Indian Union.17 He observed.

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When the whole of sovereignty is transferred, the territory of that particular ruler becomes the territory of India, with complete sovereignty vested in the Indian Union.18

Addressing a mammoth gathering at Nare Park. Bombay Dr Ambedkar advised the Scheduled Castes to change their narrow outlook of the past and place the larger interests of the country above their sectarian ends.99 From the Dr Ambedkar's patriotic activities are conspicuously remarkable. He was mainly concerned with the unity and integrity of the nation.

From the explanation of various provisions of Constitution it is clearly remarkable that Dr Ambedkar insisted upon the unity and integrity of India. In Article 1 of the Draft Constitution India was described as a 'Union of States'. Criticising the Article some members said that it should have been described as the 'Federation of States' instead of 'Union of States'. Giving his reply to the criticism, Dr Ambedkar said:

The use of the word 'Union' is deliberate ... The Drafting Committee wanted to make it clear that though India was to be a Federation, the Federation was not the result of an agreement by the states to join a Federation and that the Federation not being the result of an agreement. No State has right to succeed from it. The Federation is a Union because it is indestructible. Though the country and the people may be divided into different states for convenience of administration the country is one integral whole, its people a single people living under a single imperium derived from a single source, 20

The form of Constitution was characterised as the "federal in form and unitary in spirit" only to hold the country united both in peace-time and war-time In the Draft Constitution Dr Ambedkar prescribed single citizenship, a single judiciary and uniformity in fundamental laws to integrate Indian society which was not only divided into caste and class, but also into regions, religions, languages, traditions and cultures. Therefore a strong Centre was indispensable to maintain the territorial integrity and administrative discipline. However, in the Draft Constitution he suggested the acceptance of Hindi in the nagari script as the national language of India.21 When it was finally decided that India should be divided into India and Pakistan, Ambedkar at that time demanded the division of Punjab and Bengal, and the territories to be added to India.22 Moreover, he embraced Buddhism with thousands of untouchables and revived the consciousness of social democracy in Hindu society. His acceptance of Buddhism became a boon for millions in Indian society. Had he accepted any other religious faith, it might have created a political problem.23

Dr Ambedkar was very much conscious of the nature of the Indian society based as it was on inequality and degraded values. He sincerely tried to establish a society with the order of equality and

revolutionary change in social and economic struc-

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ture he observed in the Constituent Assembly: We must make our political democracy a social democracy we must make a democracy can not last unless there lies as well. Political democracy can not last unless there lies at the base of it social democracy. What does social democracy mean? It means a way of life which recognise liberty, equality and fraternity as the principle of life. The principles of liberty, equality and fraternity are not to be treated as separate items in a trinity. They form a Union of trinity in the sense that the divorce one from the other is to defeat the years. trinity. They form a construct of trinity in the sense that to divorce one from the other is to defeat the very purpose of democracy. Liberty can not be divorced from equality, equality can not be divorced from liberty. Nor can liberty and equality be divorced from fraternity. Without fraternity, liberty and equality could not become a natural course of things. It would require a constable to enforce them. We must begin by acknowledging the fact that there is complete absence of two things in Indian society. One of these is equality. On the social plane, we have the Indian society based on the principle of graded inequality which means elevation of some degradation for others. On the economic plane, we have a society in which there are some who have immense wealth as against many who live in object poverty. On January 26, 1950, we are going to enter into a life of contradictions. In politics we will have equality and in social and economic life we will have inequality. In politics we will be recogthe principle of one man one vote and one How long shall we continue to deny equality in our social and economic life? If we continue to deny it for long we will do so only by putting our political democracy in peril. We must remove this contradiction at the earliest possible moment or else those who suffer from inequality will blow up the structure of political demo-cracy which this Assembly has so labouriously built up.24 In fact, political democracy without social and economic democracy is a double deception. Dr Ambedkar's anger and bitterness were thus justified.

Dr Ambedkar was a fervent nationalist. He stood second to none in strengthening the process of building our nation. His patriotic contribution to

human dignity. With a vision of theinging shout oundation consists of deadom at the Round Table Conference and his statesman like stand in the Constituent Assembly will long be remembered and cherished by the India nation. As a "Light of Nation", he enlightened the path of progress and imagined the future of the country. However, his pragmatic approach to the Indian social and political problems enabled him to become one of the greatest revolutionaries in the twenteth century.

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Nepalis in Assam and Asamiya National Question

MONIRUL HUSSAIN

THE Assam movement brought into sharp focus the question of the Nepalis as foreigner/Indian together with the question of East Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in Assam. Once the movement switched over from the issue of the Bohiragatas - the outsiders - to the issue of the 'Videshis' - the foreigners — the question about the status of the Nepalis was raised as the country of their origin happens to be a foreign country, Nepal. The leadership of the Assam movement demanded the deportation of all the Nepali foreigners together with the East Pakistani/Bangladeshi foreigners living in Assam illegally. Here, in this paper, we propose to comprehend the Nepali question in Assam vis-a-vis the Assam movement and the question of the Asamiya national identity in Assam.

The status of the Nepalis in India has been overlapping both legally and sociologically. We must make a distinction between (1) the Nepalis of Nepal; and (2) the Indian Nepalis, that is, the people of Nepal origin living in India for a reasonably long period of time and participating in the socio-economic and political processes in India. The second group of Nepalis has been experiencing the process of assimilation, of course, in uneven degrees depending on the situation of demography, place and areas

of their residence in India.

Though technically Nepal is a foreign country, the Nepalis were never treated as foreign nationals in India. So was the status of the Indians in Nepal. This was obviously a mutually accepted understanding between two neighbouring countries with a history of cordial social, political and economic relations without a natural physical boundary to demarcate distinctly. The ongoing trends found manifestation formally in the Indo-Nepal Friendship Treaty of 1950, the Tripartite Delhi Agreement of 1951 and the revised Indo-Nepal Agreement of 1956. All these ensured the continuity of equal rights for the Indians with the Nepalis in Nepal and the Nepalis with the Indians in India. Accordingly, both the Indians and the Nepalis can seek employment, engage in agriculture or business besides the right to movement. settlement and acquire property without hindrance.

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Therefore, a Nepali can come to India without a passport and a visa, and an Indian can similarly go to Nepal without a passport and a visa. Though at the technical level, Nepal and India are two separate countries but they have preferred to overlap the vital issue like citizenship/nationality. This overlapping has given the right to immigrate without any restrictions for the citizens of both the assur ing, gene

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Historically significant migrations with subsequent serious socio-political ramifications in Assam like the migrations of: (1) the Bengali baboos to run the subordinate levels of the colonial administration in Assam; (2) the black-tribals from the Jharkhand-Chotanagpur region to Assam's tea-plantations; (3) the migration of the East Bengal peasants to Assam's vast wasteland; (4) the migration of the Nepalis to Assam had a common link, that is, the colonial context under which Assam faced social transformation. However, it should be noted that Assam's connection with Nepal is historically very old. There were matrimonial connections between the medieval ruling families of Assam and Nepal. Historical limited migraevidences suggest that some tion of the Nepalis took place long before the British colonisation of Assam. Even, according to a scholar, one group of Pandas (priests) of Assam's famous Kamaikhya temple owes their origin in Nepal (Chetri 1983: 13). Those who migrated from Nepal in limited numbers gradually assimilated with the emerging Asamiya society and abandoned their past Nepali identity and connections, like other migrants in pre-British Assam.

Besides these historical linkages, Assam had ethnic/racial connections with the Nepalis. A large number of the Nepalis belong to the sub-ethnic group what Prof Suniti Kumar Chatterji (1951) calls the Kiratas. For instance, Limbu, Tamang, Lapecha, Mogor, Gurung and Sherpa, etc. belong to the Kiratsa. Traditionally, they live in the eastern part of Nepal which is geographically not very far from the western border of Assam. Similarly. Assam too, has a large number of the Kirata people like Bodos Kacharis, Rabhas and Mishings, etc. who are recog nised as the scheduled tribes of Assam plains. They are all very similar in their physical appearance. Remarkably, few scholars have found that the Moran of Upper Assam originally came from Nepal in seventh century AD (Benudhar Sarma, Kedernath Brahmachari etc.) Brahmachari etc. quoted in Chetri, 1983: 5). From this brief historical account, it would not be ven difficult to assume that the historical and ethologracial relationship between Assam and Nepal is much deeper than what is really apparent

the popular level.

assumption, the Nepalis of Assam, empirically speaking, do not belong to a single monolithic homogeneous community; rather, they are divided and sub-divided among themselves on the basis of caste, sub-caste, ethnicity; regional identity, language and dialects. 'Gorkhali' is not only the major language of Nepal but also a lingua-franca of many other Nepalis who have their own dialects. The linguistic composition of the Nepalis in Assam reflect the original linguistic situation of Nepal. The Nepalis in Assam besides their Gorkhali dialects, use Hindi and Asamiya as their second and third languages respectively.

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Despite the historical and ethnic relations, as the Asamiya society during the pre-British period was semi-tribal and semi-feudal in nature, there was obviously neither substantial migration nor emigration. All the major migrations to Assam with serious political ramifications took place, we must note, under the colonial context. After colonising India, the British rulers realised the suitability of the Nepalis as very loyal soldiers of the colonial The colonial historian Gait (1905:292) recorded that in 1817, nine years prior to the formal annexation of Assam, the colonial army which penetrated into Assam ostensibly to drive out the marauding Burmese army had many Hindustani and Gorkha soldiers.

The British found the Nepali most suitable for their colonial army and exploited them accordingly in their colonial expansion and consolidation in North-Eastern India. Gradually, the Nepali soldiers became the most loyal servants, of the British colonial army. In many civilian jobs too, the Nepalis proved their loyalty very strongly. This was obviously a part of their manifested social behaviour. What made the entire community dependable and faithful to their masters? A scholar observed very pertinently: "The only political system they are acquainted with are that of paternalistic feudal and theocratic rulers. As a result, obedience, loyality, conformity and subordination are inseparable aspects of the Nepali personality and character." (Sinha

As an intergral part of the British colonial expansion and consolidation, many Nepalis migrated to Assam. The colonial rulers naturally encouraged the Nepali soldiers to settle down in Assam after their discharge or retirement from the army. This led to the Nepali settlement on the foothills between Arunachal Pradesh and Assam, and the Naga Hills and Assam, forest fringes and river banks. Besides, a good number of them settled down in Meghalaya and Manipur. Such ex-armymen later became agriculturists and some of them engaged in small dairy business business. Apart from discovering the suitability of the Nepalla Part from discovering the British rulers the Nepalis for the colonial army, the British rulers also found them to be very hardy hill cultivators.

They specificant in tribal They encouraged the Nepali settlement in tribal hills to create a buffer against the unadministered the rebellious tribals of the Assam hills. The British Policy of encouraging the Nepali migration to the hills, Dutt observed, led to their majority

e popular level.

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chernal and ecangoling and they composed about 40 per Like the Muslims of Assam, contrary to popular cent of the total population of Bhutan (Dutt 1981:

Needless to say, there were certain strong push factors in Nepal which pressurised constantly a large number of the Nepalis to seek livelihood outside Nepal. The economic forces behind their migration were (1) increasing fragmentation of landholding; (3) ecological crisis (2) indebtedness; through deforestation; (4) rising population without further land to cultivate; and finally (5) chronic deficit of food production in the hill areas of Nepal (ibid, 1981: 1053). These push factors together with certain pull factors in Assam propelled the Nepali migration to Assam and the North-East. The major pull factors were: (1) the colonial patronage; (2) abundance of land both in plains and hills of Assam: (3) thinness of the local population and their refusal to work in certain hard fields opened up after colonisation; (4) similarity of natural environment; (5) scope for employment in the colonial army and police; in the offices as chaukidar, darwan, chaprasi and peon, etc. Besides these, there were avenues in the agricultural sector, dairy, transport and construction of roads and buildings, etc. The negative push factors in Nepal and the positive pull factors in India/Assam created conditions for their emigration from Nepal.

By the end of 1950, one in every 10 Nepalis had immigrated (lbid: 1053). In India alone by 1970, there were 1.5 million Nepalis out of a total population of 55 million in Nepal (ibid: 1053). The annual rate of migration of 1961 was 82,000 a year and 20,000 of them remained in India each year (Ibid 1053, also see Uppadhayaya and Abueva 1975). These facts demonstrate the very strong tendency among the Nepalis for migration, both temporary and permanent. Obviously, this is not a brain drain to worry the Government of Nepal. This is obviously a migration of various oppressed people struggling for a dignified survival. The very problem of survival forced them out of Nepal. The existing laws of India and Nepal have helped them to look for alternative

outside their motherland.

They can very easily venture even an experimental migration. This is of course highly impossible for a Bangladesh national. Dutt (1981: 1053) observed that the Nepali migration has taken place throughout South Asia not just in North-Eastern India alone, and as such must be viewed on world scale.

WITH above background in mind, we can now move to comprehend the magnitude of the Nepali migration to Assam. The data of nineteenth century Assam on the Nepalis are extremely scanty and sometimes not very reliable too. However, to have an idea, we can use the data provided by Hunter (1879) who based his account on the basis of the first Census Report of India 1872.

Table No 1 indicates a very small number of Nepali population in the Brahmaputra valley. These figures are exclusive of the Nepali soldiers serving the

MAINSTREAM April 15, 1989

Number of the Nepali Population in the Brahmaputra Valley 1872

	A STATE OF THE PARTY OF THE PAR	
Districts	Number	THE PERSON NAMED IN
Goalpara Kamrup	34 125	
Darrang Nowgong	87 1	
Sibsagar Lakhimpur	476 260	
Brahmaputra valley	Total 983	A STATE OF

Source: Computed from Hunter 1879.

colonial army and those who lived in the hill districts and the Surma valley. These figures included the Nepali civilians in the Brahmaputra valley alone. The actual number of the Nepalis for the entire Assam would be much more than what has been presented. Even then, the figure would remain insignificant. However, it shows that the Nepalis had made their presence felt as a distinct group in the early seventies of nineteenth century British Assam.

TABLE NO. 2 Growth of Nepali Population in Assam 1901-71

Number	Percentage of total population of Assam	
21,347	0.35	
47,654	0.67	
70 344	0.94	
88,306	1.02	
1,01,338	1.26	
2,15,213	1.98	
3,49,116	2.38	
	21,347 47,654 70 344 88,306 1,01,338 2,15,213	

Source: Census of India Reports 1901-71. Davis 1951 and Das 1980.

Table No. 2 demonstrates the gradual growth of the Nepalis, both numerically and percentage-wise, in Assam over a period of 70 long years (1901-71). The number of the Nepalis increased from 21,347 in 1901 to a substantial 3,49,116 in 1971. Their percentage in total population increased from meagre 0.35 per cent to 2.3 per cent in these 70 years. They had shown the sign of their growth in British Assam, Needless to say, the massive migration of various groups to Assam served the colonial interest very well. The colonial rulers encouraged the massive migration of several groups of oppressed people to Assam.

We must note here that the British did not encourage such migration' out of their desire to liberate them from oppression but to transfer them to a different kind of exploitation, that is, colonial exploitation. The exploitation of the black tribals in tea plantation benefitted the British investors. The migration of East Bengal peasants contributed to the enhancement of colonial revenue in Assam to which the colonial rulers were fundamentally interested. The influx of the Nepalis also helped to increase the colonial revenue in Assam. An economic historian elaborated this aspect in his study (Guha 1977: 91-94). He pointed out:

TABLE NO. Pigitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chardnai and data and data not be provided from time immemorial the traditional right to graze their cattle freely on the village commons and neighbouring forests. Hence never before were there any habit of growing fodder crops on their private lands. Under the British regime, the right was gradually encroached upon to bring forth additional revenue to the exchequer (Ibid: 92).

At the initial stage, the revenue collected from grazing fees was not very significant. However, with the gradual influx of the Nepalis and other graziers alongwith their cattles to Assam increased the revenue substantially, from a meagre Rs 15,640 in 1895 to Rs 86,325 by 1920 (ibid; 92). This also explains one of the reasons behind the colonial encouragement to the Nepali migration to Assam. From the massive migration of various oppressed groups, the British rulers succeeded in their main colonial interests, that is, to raise the revenue without any investment in Assam.

The Nepali population continued to grow during the post-colonial period too. The growth rate of the Nepali population in Assam was very high during the period 1951-71. Numerically they rose from 1,01,338 in 1951 to 3,49,116 in 1971 indicating nearly 3.5 times growth within a span of 20 years only. Their percentage in the total population of Assam also nearly doubled during the same period. During 1951-71, the Nepalis became a demographically significant group in Assam. They sending their own representatives to the Assam Legislative Assembly and played an important role in ensuring the electoral success to some extent of the Congress party in Assam. This was possible because of their numerical strength in certain constituencies.

How do we explain the very significant migration of the Nepalis to Assam? As stated earlier, the push factors in Nepal remained very strong and forced a very significant number of the Nepalis to migrate. Secondly, the Indo-Nepal Friendship Treaty of 1950 and two similar additional treaties of 1951 and 1956, conferred upon the Nepalis equal rights with the Indian citizens in India to free movement, seek employment, engage in business, acquire property and settlement. Thirdly, in the wake of the Chinese aggression of 1962, the Government had to build-up a new communication network besides improving the existing ones in Assam and the NEFA (now Arunachal Pradesh). A sizeable number of the Nepalis were already in the Indian army and the Assam Rifles posted in Assam and the NEFA besides the Nepali civilians. The construction of new roads, particularly the strategically important border roads and link roads and the construction of 350 Km long new Ranagapara-North Lakhimpur Jonai-Murkone-Selek railway line created tremendous scope for the employment of the Nepalis both 10 Assam and the NEFA.

It must be recognised that the border road cons truction inside the NEFA was an extremely arduous task and the Nepali labours regarded as the best for such gigantic task. As a result, many Nepalis mig rated to Assam and the NEFA. Most of them later settled down in Assam. The NEFA did not share the burden of the migrants because of the operation of inner-line system which did not permit non Therefore persons to settledown permanently there Therefore, Assam had to accommodate a larger

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THE protest against the Nepali migration to Assam has never been strong. In the wake of the Chinese aggression of 1962, many Nepali soldiers sacrificed their lives to protect the north-east frontier of India. This generated tremendous sympathy for the Nepalis in Assam. They were largely well-accepted and well-treated in the larger Assamese society.

However, the emergence of the Assam, movement on foreigners issue radically transformed the existing relationship between the Nepalis and the Asamiyas. in Assam. The Nepalis, irrespective of their length of stay in Assam virtually became dangerous unwanted foreigners in Assam who were "threatening the socio-cultural and political identity of the Asamiyas" in their traditional homeland. The powerful Asamiya bourgeois press successfully labelled all the Nepalis in Assam as foreigners.

Needless to say, the Assam movement had a very wide mass base both in urban and rural Assam. The demand for removing the names of the Nepalis from the electoral rolls, deporting/expelling them from India/Assam and labelling them indiscriminately as foreigners very deeply affected the Nepalis of Assam. It obviously propelled the sharpening of the traditional Nepali identity consciousness. The Indian Nepali leaders from Sikkim and Darjeeling added fuel to the anger of the Nepalis living in Assam.

The Nepalis in Assam started mobilising themselves under separate organisations and distinctly aligned with the Right-wing political forces opposed to the ideology and praxis of the Assam movement. Alongwith other aggravated groups, the Nepalis were forced to assert their distinct identity in Assam as Indian citizens. It would be worthwhile to note here that till the imposition of 'Restricted Area Permit' is 1207 to 1207 the imposition of 'Restricted Area Permit' in 1976 for entry into Assam and other North-Eastern States, they had the right to enter Assam. Therefore, those who entered Assam prior to the inches the states of t to the imposition of permit system in 1976 considered the sidered themselves as Indian citizens.

Inspite of abrasions between the Nepalis and the Asamiyas in the wake of Assam movement, we would be Assam would like to emphasise that though the Assam Movement demanded deportation/expulsion of the Pakistanis/Bangladeshis, the depth of demand and the intensity. the intensity of feeling against the Nepalis were definitely of feeling against the Nepalis were definitely not as vociferous as against the East Pakistanis/Bangladeshis. The last two categories were obviously ladeshis. The last two categories has a samiya Were obviously overlapped with the Na-Asamiya ' Muslims and the Hindu Bengalis in Assam.

of the problem. The Asamiya middle class is mainly composed of caste Hindus and they largely monopolised the middle class jobs and opportunities in Assam. Therefore, the dominant section of the Asamiyas does not consider from their limited class point of view the Nepalis as an emerging threat to their middle class monopoly very unlike the Hindu Bengalis in Assam. The Nepalis of Assam are at present in no position to threaten the Asamiya middle class. Besides this, Barman (1980: 12) has pointed out that numerically the Nepalis are insignificant compared to the Bengalis' in Assam, hence, there is less vociferosity against the Nepalis. On the other hand the Nepalis play a subordinate role in Assam and most of them are toiling masses; therefore, they are unlikely to create an identity crisis among the Asamiyas (ibid: 12). All these accounts for lesser fear against the Nepalis in

This also brings to the focus another aspect of the Nepalis living in Assam: that due to their weaker position in the class structure of Assam and their near-total failure in responding to the middle class formation in Assam, the Nepalis have very paradoxically helped them to draw lesser backlash from the Asamiya bourgeoisie. It seems clear that if they continue to the play same subordinate role and fail to improve their class position significantly, they are unlikely to face severe backlash in the near future.

The data we have presented (Table No. 2) does not show any kind of threat by the Nepalis to the Asamiya nationality. However, their migration pattern has shown unmistakably that their growth rate has been very rapid during the post-independence period. This makes a section of the Asamiyas apprehensive. Like the Bengali Hindus, the Nepalis are also very sensitive about their language and culture. The Nepalis of Assam, alongwith other Indian Nepalis, have been demanding the inclusion of Gorkhali/Nepali language in the Eighth Schedule. In recent times, the Nepalis have become very conscious of their identity whether in Sikkim or West Bengal or in Assam. That has to some extent affected their relationship with other groups in the States concerned. In the wake of the Assam movement, like the Bengali Hindus and the Na-Asamiya Muslims, they too were opposed to certain demands and actions of the movement. Though, there were disputes, none of these groups was opposed to the deportation of foreigners from Assam' through due legal process. Of course, the Nepalis as a community did not suffer the way the Bengali Hindus and the Na-Asamiya Muslims suffered civil violence and the Asamiyas suffered state violence.

The earlier generation of the Nepalis in Assam have deeply assimilated and integrated with the Asamiya nationality. They prefer to identify them-selves as the Nepali Asamiya. The Nepalis of the earlier generation had impressive records of fighting for India's independence in Assam. Together with the Asamiyas they fought against the notorious grouping scheme, they also fought for the official recognition of Asamiya as the medium of instruction Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennel and Gangotimat Anuprabashar Samasiya (in upto the graduate level at par with English and Asamiya) Vigyan Jeuti Vol. XV:3. "therefore for all practical purpose, the Nepalis are Asamiyas" (Neog: 1974). However, their concentration in certain pockets and continuous migration have affected their assimilation process deeply. Unlike the earlier Nepali migrants, the new migrants prefer to maintain their social and economic relations with the place of their origin in Nepal. The duality of their social roots hinders their assimilation with the larger Asamiya society. And, they

suffer alienation both ways.

OUR study has shown that the migration of the Nepalis to Assam, like the migration of the Bengali baboos to man the subordinate positions meant for the Indians in the colonial administrative structure, black tribals to Assam's tea-plantation and the oppressed East Bengal peasants to Assam's wasteland had a common link: the colonial context under which Assam experienced social transformation. The growth of the Nepali population has been very remarkable both numerically and percentage-wise during the post-independence period. Obviously, this was a part of the entire development process

The strong push factors in Nepal have been forcing a large number of the Nepalis to move out of Nepal every year. Several treaties between the Government of India and Nepal, the massive construction of road and railway lines in Assam and the NEFA in the wake of the Chinese aggression of 1962, have propelled the migration of the Ncpalis to Assam and the North-East. The Nepalis are not threatening the demographic, social, economic. cultural and political identity of the Asamiya nationality. The earlier generation of the Nepalis has already identified with the Asamiya and have severed their relationship with Nepal. The later migrants perhaps would take little more time to assimilate. If the social compulsions are removed, the Asamiya nationality is likely to gain more from the assimilative process.

However, this is not our intention to say that as the Nepalis are not threatening the Asamiya national identity, therefore, the Nepali immigration should be allowed to continue. The present Assam is neither land-abundant nor is it thinly populated. Over the years Assam has transformed radically. Therefore, we would prefer to state that by both energising the assimilative and the integrative processes in a demo-cratic manner and calling a halt to the immigration from both Nepal and Bangladesh would one hope to heal the real or imaginary injury to the Asamiya nationality caused by their fear of losing their identity in their traditional homeland - Assam. []

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Violence in Rural Punjab

SUKHDEV SINGH SOHAL

VIOLENCE has become 'endemic' in rural Punjab. The present violence is qualitatively and quantitatively different from the earlier criminal outbursts which the Punjabi society has witnessed since independence. Its intensity is appalling and pattern self-perpetuating.

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Every Punjabi is becoming nostalgic about peace which was all-pervasive till 1978. Much of the violence is structured in the political economy of the State and political expediency has further complicated the situation. The present paper in an attempt to trace out vital clues that unleashed violence and consequently conditioned the Punjabi society.

VIOLENCE is a complex societal phenomenon which attempts to strike at the institutional aspect of state and society. Its purpose is 'to induce fear and intimidation'². Despite its political overtones, the targets are often not persons, establishments and institutions symbolising or pursuing certain politics, but 'annonymous masses' that have nothing to do with the conflict.³

Moreover, instead of treating acts of terrorism as senseless violence, it is a form of violent communication strategy. Its purpose is to communicate fear with a view to 'achieve' a desired goal. With technological advancemnt, the intensity of violence has become unbelievable. It has moral moorings which entail drastic socio-psychological consequences.

For an economically weak and militarily strong polity, violence assumes significance. Broadly speaking, terrorism, as a form of violence, is 'epiphenomenal', 'coercive intimidation', 'a mode of psychological warfare', 'a political instrument' with inbuilt strategic rationale that often backfires.⁵

II

IN Punjab, colonial rule reinforced linguistic chauvinism, sectoral and demographic preponderance along communal lines. Partition and the consequential exit of the Muslims further consolidated these tendencies. Large scale exodus of the Sikhs from political profile of the Sikhs.?

Capitalistic development pursued by the Indian has resulted in relative economic deprivation.

The author is a Lecturer, Department of History, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar.

Production and distribution systems got belinked-It had a differential effect on different sections of the peasantry. Moreover, the transition of the capitalist farmers into industrialists practically became impossible and surplus' income has started passing into conspicuous consumption.

Regional aspirations of the Akali party could not materialise due to factionalism. Political expediency on the part of the Indian National Congress added to the frustrations among the Akalis. It underlined the need for restructuring Centre-State relations.

This view was logically encapsulated in the Anandpur Sahib Resolution propounded by the Akali party which unfortunately began to be viewed as 'separatist' and 'communal' document. Constant compaign in the Jalandhar vernacular press initiated the process of communal polarisation. With religious tangles the process of agitational politics spearheaded by the Akali party got unfolded which ultimately resulted in the "politics of terrorism". Henceforth, the Punjab problem has become 'a tragedy' produced by the workings of the economy and politics of the Indian ruling classes. 11

III

POLITICS of violence hinges on silencing the opposition within and without Sikhism and for immobilising various socio-political institutions. In the process violence is getting institutionalised and the common Punjabi feels sandwiched between state and individual terrorism.¹² Agitational politics under the rubric of *Dharm Yudh Morcha* mobilised the rural masses and it became difficult to channelise it on sound democratic principles.

Indecisiveness on the part of politicians added to complications which resulted in cynicism. The administration got paralysed through constant closures. Law and order agencies acquired more powers and implementation of steps against agitators and offenders infuriated Sant Longowal and Sant Bhindrawale who issued 'warnings' to the officials. Consequently, the shift to extremism became prominent and resulted in the entry of armed forces into the Golden Temple. This sent shock waves among a majority of the Sikhs.

The operations 'Bluestar' and 'Woodrose' compelled the Sikh youth to go underground on a large scale. The assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on October 31, 1984 and the consequent 'carnage' further confounded the situation. Various militant organisations mushroomed and attracted the unemployed, underemployed youth and poor peasants

who had lost the game in the Green Revolution. Out and of 3000 persons in jails except some police personnel PSEB employees others were unemployed. Similarly, the interrogation of 117 hardcore terrorists rounded in 'Operation Black Thunder' reveals that they came from "poor families' had a 'low socioeconomic status' and victims of 'perceived injustice'. Terrorism had for them 'a romantic appeal'.13

Repeatedly, attempts have been made by militants to create 'a central command' and take up political issues with the Government. Through various Sarbat Khalsa documents the thesis of 'exploitation of Sikhs at the hands of the Hindu-dominated Centre' has been articulated to provide an ideological orientation to terrorism.¹⁴ The Panthic Committee's demand for a 'separate state' added a new dimension to the crisis and the further fragmentation of the Sikh political opinion weakened the democratic forces.

The inflow of sophisticated weaponry in the form of AK 47s, across the international border, outgunned the police and added a qualitative dimension to violence. However, the constant para-military vigilance and the subsequent absence of political dialogue resulted in fragmentation of the 'central command' and further criminalisation of militant organisations. The ideological orientation directed violence along communal lines to bring about mutual population migration and demographic derance of the Sikhs with the purpose of thus rescuing them from the 'Hindu backlash'. Initially, their main thrust was to eliminate those officials who were allegedly involved in rampant corruption and part of the coercive apparatus. With the passage of time this thrust got diffused and ordinary families became the targets.

This vicious process has paradoxically further resulted in rampant corruption, intimidation, insecurity, absenteeism and mass copying which may take years to eliminate. Violence has helped in increasing their intensity because of the partial breakdown of democratic channels to counter these malpractices. The law and order agencies with wideranging powers under the various anti-terrorist acts have acquired more muscle powers. With one pretext or another the terms 'harbourer' and 'terrorist' have been applied with ulterior motives thereby partially alienating the people. Personal feuds have been taken up for bargaining among the parties compelling their members to join terrorist organisations and wreck vengeance.

Local political bodies like panchayats have been sidelined. Even their elected representatives have often not been trusted and involved in mopping up activities. In protest against 'police harassment', more than 40 sarpanches and 150 panches tendered their resignations en masse in the sensitive police district of Batala. The 'dictatorial attitude' of senior police officers had created a feeling of alienation'. 15 Moreover, organisation of anti-terrorist criminal bands with official connivance has created a volatile situa-

With sophisticated weapons and geographical acquintance militants have partially silenced the local population. The Green Revolution had initia-

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennal and eGangoti reen Revolution. Out ted the process of disintegration of village as a unit and surplus-producing farmers started moving in to the fields. Such demographic dispersion in farms has made effective combing up operations almost difficult. Para-military forces knowing these limitations have reconciled and it appears as if the mutual times table has been adjusted giving a free hand to militants after a particular period. This is known to all Puniabis in rural areas which is giving indispensibility to terrorism. Local disputes are being referred to ring leaders who put pressure on parties to make concessions to a particular person and a party Threatening letters, extortion of money, snatching of weapons and kidnapping have become common phenomenon.

Conspicuous consumption has become a major target for violence and all status symbols like cars tractors and scooters are oftenly levied. Well-to-do farmers prefer shifting to urban areas where there is relative peace. Forced 'social reformation' in certain ceremonies initially did evoke some reaction but by now people outwardly approve and provide justification of it through social and economic terms. Consequently, the use of intoxicants, meat and vulgar music has stopped.

For reinforcing the legitimacy the militant organisations have disowned the responsibility of extortion and killing of innocent persons. 16 These organisations have blamed official sponsored criminal bands, a fact highlighted with the brutal murder of an able police officer Sital Das, SSP, Patiala, by a policeman who acted as 'hitman'.

Similarly, violence in Punjab has affected mostly the youth. There is a general suspicion about the youth among the law and order agencies. It has created fears for being involved and interrogated. The entire educational system has come under its impact. Mass copying with the tacit approval of invigilators has become an accepted norm. Parents feel reconciled because in case merit is taken for recruitment their wards may stand a chance. Obviously, marks indicate merit and all of them may not spare enough money for bribery. Most of the schools are on the verge, of closure due to the shifting of teachers to urban areas. The standards of education have reached absymally low levels giving clear indications of unemployment and frustration in the years to come. Schools and colleges in rural Punjab have become the major recruitment ground of the militant organisations. Lack of proper vocationalisation of education has further facilitated this task.

Consequently, violence in rural Punjab, paril cularly in the districts of Amritsar, Gurdaspul Ferozepore and Kapurthala, has become 'endemic' Lack of proper briefing about the religious heritage of the Sikhs has often brought religious symbols under suspicion the law enforcing agencies creating unpleasant situations. For psychological reinforce ment the people have occasionally gone for religious solace. Brutality has resulted in disorientation of the human aspect and lack of alternative ideology has placed religion in the centrestage—which is com monly dubbed as fundamentalism.18

Politics from above with overt and covert political interests has undermined the political institution CC-0. In Public Domain. Gurukul Kangri Collection, Haridwai

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at the grossroot levels. Law and order agencies have the grossroot levels. at the gross vested interests for prolonging the crisis and hence dominating the civil administration. and house the police chief advised 'the people to Significantly, the police chief advised 'the people to learn to live with terrorism'. This message has gone to the masses in the rural areas and there is tacit reconciliation with the situation. Consequently, all the plans to put the people against the terrorists have so far failed.

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VIOLENCE in the present decade has claimed nearly 25,000 lives. Its intensity in the rural areas is predominant. Almost all forms of violence have gone for experiments. They have marginalised the collective initiative at local levels. At present socio-political institutions face tough challenges and demand early solution to the crisis. Witch-hunting based on the 'foreign hand' would only prolong it.

Paradoxically, retired military generals are emphasising recourse to the political process and a political party (BJP) for a military solution. Such diversity of

opinions shows the complexity of situation.

Only the revival of the political process may initiate peoples' participation. 19 Moreover, it is futile to hope that an atmosphere conducive to the effectiveness of the political process can be created in Punjab only after the government firmly puts an end to extremist activities.20

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Understanding Religion

AVIJIT PATHAK

THERE is no escape. The question that ought to be raised and answered is why religion, despite all secular manifestos, rhetorics and condemnations,

continues to retain its magical power.

Well, it is possible to argue that there is no such thing as religion; what exists in its name is bad politics, something that is inherently ugly, something that tempts society's evil forces to corrupt the popular psyche. Yet, the fact remains that religon, irrespective of the forms it takes, does prevail; it attracts, hyponotises, fascinates; it is not something withering away. It enters politics, shapes the activities of a modern state. It creates what is called fundamentalism; it breeds violence, causes communal riots. It also inspires many to renounce the world, its brutalities; it promises a counter culture; it liberates, evolves a profound art of seeing.

In other words, religion is everywhere — in the glorification of sati, in the politics of a Shahabuddin or a Niranjan Dev, in the condemnation of Salman Rushdies. The Satanic Verses or in the truly noble, altruistic activities of a Baba Amte or a Mother Teresa. Indeed, religion, with its \u00edinnumerable and often contradictory manifestations, remains a para-

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Perhaps it is easier to condemn it. That, however, does not help us. Because religion is here, amongst us. The question is how to understand it — not with a sceptic's cycnicsm, but with a liberating conscience you and I need to make our lives better, nobler, to evolve an integral, harmonious vision of life.

What is, however, immediately important to discuss is why religion, for a modern, progressive mind, has lost its meaning, why, if not condemned, it is often considered as a set of irrational beliefs and rituals not having the slightest relevance in our age. A secular critique of religion ought to be examined carefully in order to understand its dialectic, its inner dynamics, how religion, in the absence of a deep inner experience or a true spirit to guide it, gets reduced to another mechanism of escape or an ideology of oppression.

First, the process of rationalisation that begins with the advancement of a modern secular era sees something in religion that repels, that poses an obstacle D obstacle. Rationalisation is a process of engagement with the world — the world that is immediately visible world — the world that is immediately visible, tangible, quantifiable. Rationalisation is a promise with which modern man gifted with science and technol and technology studies and conquers nature, estab-

lishes a secular ... industrial world.

The author is a free lance writer.

The spirit of rationalisation, said Max Weber, the eminent German sociologist, is seen everywhere in the market, in the secular polity, in bureaucracy, in all institutions that symbolise progress. Although, as Weber said, a religion like Calvinism encourages and stimulates the spirit of rationalisation, other religions - particularly Eastern religions like Hinduism and Buddhism-negate the very spirit of rationalisation. Because these religions are "other-wordly" a believer is seldom encouraged to participate in the real world; all that is temporal breeds illusions, miseries, unhappiness! Religion kills the passion. the will power man needs to produce, to establish industry, to do all that a vital physical man needs to make, life pleasant. Instead, religion denies the world, breeds pessimism, encourages passivity, a withdrawl symptom, a death wish. Religion, the argument goes, is an obstacle, a mechanism of escape!

Secondly, the "salvation" that religion promises. rationalists and radicals argue assertively, is illusory. While the world around is filled with poverty, illiteracy, army oppression, the believer's 'nirvanic consciousness' or the 'communion with God' appears false. Because this salvation is inherently narcissistic, it does not bring the believer closer to the concrete ... historical man, his real experience hunger or illiteracy, powerlessness or violence. An attempt to transcend time while not living in it or an experience of the infinite while denying the finite is

not what man needs to humanise the world.

This kind of consciousness is deceptive; it sis, as Marx would say, the opium the oppressed, in the absence of a collective movement for a better social world, need to console themselves, rationalise their miseries, their defeats. In other words, religon reveals man's inability to bear the real, the constraints of time and history. Not surprisingly then, as Freud, another radical thinker, said, religion is our "collective neurosis". Like a child man, despite his adulthood, cannot bear the world alone, cannot endure suffering, the continual dialectic of life and death, pleasure and pain, the Eros and the Thanatos. In God, said Freud, what is projected is the image of the father - man needs to be assured that there is a powerful father, a God to protect him, to save him.

And thirdly, religion with its dogmas and rituals tends to acquire a monolithic character, says its critics. Every religion assumes that it and it alone has got all the answers to the riddles of human existence. It has got no tolerance, no humility. It is orthodox, ritualistic. It creates an authoritarian personality hostile to new ideas, hostile to other religions, other traditions. To be religious is to and politics ought to be separated. Modern politics defined man as a "citizen" - one who has supposedly overcome the constraints of his religion, one who can see rationally, impersonally. If religion is allowed to shape his politico-economic decisions and choices, he is bound to hamper the growth of a nation-state. Nationalism and religionalism are two different things.

These three popular criticisms of religion (religion as an obstacle to the process of rationalisation, religion as an ideology of escape or oppression and religion as a dogmatic, monolithic structure) continue to retain their validity. Because religion, as it is often practised, fails to assure a modern mind that it really liberates or makes one sufficiently equipped to cope with history. Open your eyes and experience the process of trivialisation that goes on in the name of religion. You see a greedy capitalist constructing a temple and getting "pious", a modern Shankara-charya glorifying sati and thereby upholding a "great religious tradition", a Bhagwan Rajneesh promising salvation through sexual ecstasy, communalists and fundamentalists killing innocent people! And everywhere the name of religion is uttered. When religion is so false, so brutal, so illusory, how is it possible to choose not to hear what atheists and radicals are saying? If God is seen only in georgeous temples, in communal riots, in rich man's wealth, it is better to deny that God.

God is dead; religion is false; it ought to be removed from modern man's consciousness. That is precisely a secular journey towards progress. Progress, needless to add, counts. The world that is immediately visible has witnessed the growth of science and technology, sought to provide comforts and privileges. Yet, there is a void, a void, keenly felt and experienced by many. First, with the process of rationalisation and secularisation begins man's almost pathological attachment to the temporal. Well, it satisfies the desires and aspirations of the vital, physical man; it continues to make him finite.

But there is a primary paradox in the human situation. He is finite: yet, he intends to be infinite. He is small, egotistic; yet, he intends to embrace the universe, gets merged with the ocean. He lives in time, in history; yet, he seeks to experience timelessness and eternity. He is in the world preoccupied with his work, business, duties, responsibilities; yet, he seeks complete nirvana, bliss, peace, happiness. In other words, he wants to have an experience of transcendence, an experience of unboundedness.

Secondly, for many, a secular...industrial civilisation tends to cause a crisis of meaning. Progress, growth rate, efficiency, socialism - all secular ideas, despite their historical relevance, fail to provide answers to the riddles of human existence. Who am I? Why am I? What is there beyond the world? Why should I exist? Why should I do what I continue to do? These questions havn't the ideas of many. Those who raise these questions, as Jung, the psychoanalyst with a mystic, visionary experience said, are unlikely to be satisfied by popular secular rationalisations: man is finite; he exists simply to increase his

prevent the possibility of a dialogue by lence and continual assertion; in a modern secular era religion but can merge with a dialogue, bigger ego — the collection and politics ought to be separated. Modern politics tivity, the state, the nation. Essentially, they want to experience something deeper, finer, something that arouses their faith and hope, makes them convinced that life, despite miseries, sufferings, temporalities. a realm of experience that lasts, that makes life desirable.

An experience of unboundedness and a profound meaning of existence - these are not "things" to be consumed immediately, instantly. Man needs to initiate a new journey, a process... And this seems so difficult. The constraints of time, the constraints of history, the rationalities of a secular era make this journey almost impossible. Everything around him office, family, market, bureaucracy - makes him smaller, smaller. Freedom or transcendence becomes an impossibility. This causes restlessness, despair

violence, meaninglessness.

For nihilists life is absurd, purposeless, devoid of any hidden beauty, meaning significance. For others not capable of undertaking a spiritual journey, yet experiencing restlessness, religion — a distorted religion - appears as a refuge. It makes them feel that they are important; they are not just small time functionaries working in offices, leading an insignificant life and then dying; their lives are endowed with a purpose! With this begins growth of religious fundamentalism, a distorted, violent, perverted religion that inspires, many to celebrate the irrational. Essentially, when in the absence of a spiritual, revolutionary journey the void remains unfilled, religion assumes a negative meaning. It is full of rituals, rigidities, violent practices. It is life-killing. It is a reaction to another life-killing experience; the experience of rational, fragmented, oppressive, secular hell.

But is there a religion that liberates the mind, harmonises the psyche? The question assumes added significance in our times because, as we are seeing, what goes on in the name of religion is false, illusory, simply a reaction. Perhaps it is necessary to emphasise that religion is not what is immediately visible; men and women going to temples, yet, in their day-to-day lives doing all that is ugly and nasty or saints and mystics living in the Himalayas without bothering about the world. Religion has got a hidden meaning. Religion is primarily a profound experience — an experience that mediates between the temporal and the eternal, the visible and the invisible Religion is a new way of seeing. To be religious is not to negate the world, time and history. Instead, it is a new way of participating in the world. Religion then transforms man, makes him realise his destiny

How does this metamorphosis take place? The answer is simple. To be religious is to have an experience of unboundedness. The armour of the little ego breaks. Man embraces the universe the child, the woman, the tree, the hill, the ocean. The duality between "I" and "They" ceases to exist. That is the beginning of love, bhakti, compassion Man, then, realises that life is worthliving. And for that he needs no God, no church, no belief system. Because it is his own inner experience. He looks at the flower, experiences its beauty. He

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talks to the rising sun, the river, the hill. He sees with the spiritual a child as a child, a woman as a woman, a bird as a bird. His soul radiates and everything he touches acquires a new meaning.

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As a Zen master said: "All your mental activities will now be working in a different key, which will be more satisfying, more peaceful, more full of joy than anything you ever experienced before. The tone of life will be altered. There is something rejuvenating in the possession of Zen. The spring flower will look prettier, and the mountain stream runs coller and more transparent." Living, then, becomes a great celebration, a celebration that, however, requires no theoretical explanation, no interpretation. Because one's inner experience counts; one hears the call, gets the message and realises that God or no God, there is a realm of experience that ought to be cultivated, that is so supremely powerful that it alone can sustain life!

Is it, then, possiple to say that to be religious is to be an escapist? Never. No religious soul denies the world. He experiences the infinite through the finite, timelessness through history, action through nirvana. Time and again, religious souls came back to the world, participated in it. From Krishna's participation in the battlefield of Kuru-kshetra to the Buddha's "middle path" — the message is clear. The world is not unreal. Essentially, there is something in a spiritual experience that remains liberating all the time - that is the point of merger of love, knowledge and action. That is wisdom. And to have wisdom is to participate in the world, fight its fragmentation and bring it nearer to paradise.

That is why to have wisdom is to embrace the ideal of and practise communism. Because communism is primarily an experience of togetherness. To be religious is to be a communist. To be religious is not to be anti modern; instead, religion liberates the true spirit of modernity from its institutionalised decay. To be religious is not to be anti-rational. To be religious is to elevate the rational into the higher principle of the supra-

True, the kind of religion we are pleading for is not an easy thing to experience. It requires a process and the process ought to be initiated. It is in this context that we should remember that religious rites, rituals, festivals, provided the spirit behind them is not spirit behind them is not lost, are not irrelevant or meaningless. Because human beings differ on the basis of their perceptions and experiences. Between the Buddha and the facility of the Buddha and the finite, egotistic, temporal man lies innumerable possibility, egotistic, temporal man lies innumerable possibility. able possibilities and whatever helps man to expand his horizontellities and whatever helps man to expand his horizon, to experience love and unboundedness helps him to undertake a spiritual journey.

With this altered awareness everything man does teaching a child, loving a woman, creating a beautiful family, participating in a collective struggle acquires a spiritual meaning. Everyone can begin the process and every action is potentially sacrosant sacrosant, because religion, far from negating or repressing the empirirepressing the desires and aspirations of the empiri-cal, sensuous desires and aspirations of the empirical, sensuous man, elevates them, integrates them

To initiate this process is to initiate karmayoga. Then, man participates in the world, participates intensely, yet with a different consciousness. His little ego begins to disappear, work comes as a point of mediation between the finite and the infinite, the being and the supreme consciousness. This does not generate tamas or passivity. This does not generate death wish or withdrawal symptoms. Instead, man becomes intensely active, yet he remains free from tension, anxiety or the pathological desire for success, because with the development of a sattwic mind he realises that there is no winner, no loser; to give is to receive, everything is an offering, a prayer.

The ideal of karmayoga, needless to add, is one of the greatest gifts of religion; one of its profound radical messages. In our times Vivekananda and Gandhi showed how to lead a life of a karmayogi, how to spiritualise the world, attach a new meaning to action from the task social reconstruction to antiimperial struggle for national liberation. They demonstrated that religion, when felt and experienced deeply, could revolutionalise the world. Religion need not be feared; it ought to be saved.

A religious journey requires a deep penetrating sociological imagination, an awareness of the constraints of history, the constraints that, as Karl Marx showed, so brilliantly, cause alienation, brutalise men, kill their creativity, Religion, we have said, is primarily an experience of togetherness, unboundedness, love, sensitivity. But to love, to relate, to communicate with nature, to experience beauty one needs fulfilment. And for many it has become an impossibility. Because what Marx said remains valid even today — in a fragmented world whose priorities are money, profit and exploitation, we have lost the eyes to see a man as a man, a flower as a flower, a

Instead, everything has got reified, everything has got an "exchange value" everything is marketable. As Marx worte in Economic and Philosophic Manus-cripts of 1844. "The care-burdended, poverty stricken man has no sense for the finest play. The dealer in minerals sees only the commercial value but not the beauty and the specific character of the mineral. He has no minerological sense."

It is in this morbid, violent culture that gods, prophets, religions are sold, consumed and finally finished. Not surprisingly then, religion today is one of the attractive packages that many Eastern mystics are selling in the affluent West. Religion is just another item for consumption, an item that the culture industry popularises through its media men. The fact is that man has lost the ability to experience things as they are, the world as it is - with its beauty, vastness, greatness.

The negation of experience is what has made many cynical, desensitised people. In the absence of an experience of love and compassion or because of inability to see the beauty in the world - in a tree. in a bird, in a mother they conclude that life is purposeless. Despair is their last word. To revive religion, needless to add, is to enable man to (Continued on page 28)

MAINSTREAM April 15, 1989

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Monopoly Capital and Advertising in Indian Press

K. NAGESHWAR

66 F I were asked to choose between a Government without newspapers and newspapers without Government; I would prefer the latter," said a famous editor. Undoubtedly this is an exaggerated description of the role of the mass media in a society. But none can deny the highly important role the mass media plays in contemporary society. The unprecedented developments in the field of science and technology have revolutionised the present-day human civilisation. It is impossible to visualise the modern man's life without the companionship of the mass media.

Such a powerful instrument can be used to either create a healthy public opinion for the betterment of society, or develop trends leading to just the reverse.

The mass media in a capitalist society is an integral part of the super-structure. The class which owns the material means of production also controls the production and dissemination of ideas. Mass communication is the most affective social process in the present epoch.

This study is aimed at exploring the influence of big business on the Indian press. The Indian newspapers industry has come a long way. There has been an incessant tendency towards monopolisation and concentration in the newspapers industry making the press an enterprise of monopoly capital.

Only 26 organisations control over 70 per cent of English press, 84 per cent of Telugu press, 73 percent of Malayalam press and 51 per cent of Gujarati

What is the reason for this unhealthy trend? During the closing years of last century and the early part of the present one, several publications were launched on an outlay not exceeding Rs 100.00. Now, the investment on any newspaper or magazine runs into several crores of rupees making the profession a privilige of big business.

Today, every newspaper or magazine owner is busy with his several other business interests. The commercial interests of organisations that largely control the Indian press encompasse an incredible array of industries including cement, jute, shipping, steel, aluminium, chemicals, real estate, agro-chemicals, textiles, fabrics, sugars, rubber, tea, coffee, tyres, automobiles, plantanions, transport, hotels. electronics, films, travels, trading and finance, excise contracts, machinery, processed Foods, Gypsum, mining and coal, etc.

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The First Press Commission concluded: "there already exists in the Indian newspaper industry a considerable degree of concentrationship. There is a danger that this tendency might further develop in future. We are of the opinion that it would not be desirable in the interests of the freedom of choice that this tendency should be accentuated."

More than two decades after the First Press Commission submitted its report, S.K. Goyal and M. Chalapati Rau on behalf of the Delhi-based Indian Institute of Public Administration studied the ownership and control of the Indian press for the Second Press Commission. They also come out with a similar conclusion that the Indian press suffers a high degree of concentrationship in the hands of large business houses. Ever since the study a few years ago, this uhealthy trend has been aggravated making the press highly prone to big business expansion.

The Second Press Commission observed: "the ownership and control structure of newspapers establishments may not reveal in full the influence of private big business or large corporations on the Indian press. We feel that for an objective and more comprehensive view, it is necessary to undertake a full-fledged and an independent study of advertise ments in the Indian press, the report of the Indian press."

It continued to state that the influence of the private corporate sector advertisers on the press can not be underestimated. Who is advertising? How frequently? At what rate? and where? These questions need to be examined along with nature and character of news reporting, comments and coverage:

Taking inspiration from the observation made by Second Press Commission, this particular study was conducted basing on data collected from national news magazines - India Today (Delhi), Illustrated Weekly of India (Bombay), Sunday (Calcutta) and The Week (Trivandrum). Though none of the big business houses directly control these four publication tions, their influence can be ganged by looking at their share of total advertising space. The study covers a period of 18 months, that is, January 1986 to June 1987 on the basis of simple random sampling

Conclusions and Inferences of the Study

1. Foreign companies are the leading contributors to the advantage are the leading contributors to the advantage are the leading contributors. tors to the advertising revenue of all the four magazines.

2. The Sunday gets one-third of its advertising revenue from the foreign companies while other three magazines get more than one-fifth of the

revenue from foreign companieszed by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennal and eGangotri 3. The top 20 monopoly houses excluding the foreign companies in this bracket contribute more than one-fourths of the total ad revenue of India

Today and Ilustrated Weekly of India and more than one-fifth of Sunday and The Week. 4. Nearly half of the advertising revenues of India Today (48.975 per cent) and Illustrated Weekly (47.868 per cent) comes from big business

houses and foreign industries.

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5. There is a similar trend in terms of the relative contributors of different advertisers in all the four magazines - foreign companies, top 20 business houses coming first or second and Government departments and public undertakings ranking third.

6. Government departments and public undertakings are yet an another significant advertisers in all the four magazines.

7. The business activity of the parent group sometimes influences the share of different advertisers in a magazine. For instance, MM group, basically a business group, originating from Kerala which also owns The Week, that is, 5.493 per cent of the revenue of The Week while the same company's share in the total advertising revenue of India Today and Illustrated Weekly of India are 0.604 per cent and 0.32 per cent respectively. This group didn't advertise at all in Sunday.

8. The trend of domination of Birlas and Tatas in the economic sphere within the top 20 monopoly houses reflect in terms of their relative share in the advertisement revenues. of different magazines.

For instance, the top two business houses of India contributers one-third of what all the 20 business houses contribute to the advertising revenue of all the four magazines.

9. The share of Tatas and Birlas in the advertising revenue of the four magazines is nearly equal to that of the Government's share.

10. Tatas, Birlas, Bajaj groups are the leading advertisers among the top 20 monopoly houses.

11. The entire analysis reveals beyond all doubts that the big business houses and the foreign companies have a clear influence over the Indian media through the indirect influence by subsidising the Indian press through the advertising.

TABLE 1 Advertisement Versus News Content in Top Four National News Magazines

Magazines India Today Illustra	Total Pages	No. of Pages Containing Advertisements	Percentage
India weekly	3,054	1,553	50.753
Sunday The Week	2,556 1,897 2,160	634 456 501	24.804 32.058 23.194

TABLE 2

India Today

Group	Expenditure	Percentage
Foreign	1,20,58,250	22,492
Pvt Indian	83,34,000	15.544
Govt	65,18,000	12.157
Other Pvt		
Andian (Unidentified)	39,19,000	7.308
Birlas	23,66,000	4.413
Tatas	24,78,000	4.622
Hero	16,86,000	3.145
Bajaj	17,16,000	3.201
JK	16.50,000	-3.077
Thapar	12,06,000	2.249
Reliance	11,16,000	2.081
Oberoi	9,21,000	1.718
Goenka	8,10,000	1.510
Firodia	7,68,000	1.432
Joint	7,56,000	1.416
Chabria	6,84,000	1.275
Sriram	6,75,000	1.259
Mafatlal	6,12,000	1.141
LML.	5,91,000	1.102
Piramal	5,76,000	1.074
Modi	5,49,000	1.024
Walchand	5,10,000	0.951
Escorts	4,08,000	0.761
Kirloskar	3,84,000	0.716
Khatau	3,66,000	0.682
TVS	3,51,000	0.654
MM	3,24,000	0.604
Tanna	2,10,000	0.391
Bombay Dyeing	2,46,000	0.459
KL	2,52,000	0.47
Rane	1,80,000	0.335
Harivallabdas	1,80,000	0.335
Rallys	1,08,000	0.201
Kalpataru	1,08,000	0.201
	.,,,,,,,,	7,101

Source:-Data Collected from India Today.

Note:- *These Calculations have been done on the basis of the advertisement tariff rates specified in the Press and Advertisers' Year Book.

TABLE 3 Illustrated Weekly of India

Groups	Expenditure	Percentage
Foreign	30,13,200	23,246
Pvt Indian	16,76,650	13.153
Govt 7	12,04,200	9.26
Other Pvt Indians		
Unidentified	10.06,950	7.768
Bajaj	8,37,900-	6.46
Tata	7,58,100	5.84
Birla	4,55,700	3.51
Goenka	4,02,150	3.10
TVS	3,59,100	2.77
Piramal	3,15,000	2,43
JK	2,81,000	2.17
Godrej	2,75,100	2.12
LML	2,26,800	1.749
Bombay Dyeing	2,31,000	1.78
Reliance	1,70,100	1.31
Mafatlal	1,89,000	1.36
Hero	1,26,000	0.97
M. Chettiar	2,10,000	1.62
K.L.	1,68,000	1.29
Modi	1,68,000	1.29
Escorts	1,50,400	1.16
Sriram	1,26,000	0.97
Kirloskar	1,12,500	0.867
Oberoi	1,07,100	0.82
Thapar	95,550	0.73
Joint	84,000	0.64

Tanna MM Harivallabdas Jagdali	63,000 42,000 84,000 11,500 10,500	0.32 0.648 0.089 0.08
Abro	10,500	17 (17 (17 (17 (17 (17 (17 (17 (17 (17 (

Source:—The data has been collected from Illustrated Weekly from January, 1986 to June, 1987.

Note: - The Calculations were made on the basis of advertisement tariffs provided by Press and Advertisers Year Book.

TABLE 4

Sunday

Group	Expenditure	Percentage
Foreign	49,10,000	32.347
PVT Indian	15,64,000	10.303
Govt	14,86,000	9.78
Thapar	4,62,000	3.04
Birlas	9,44,000	6.2
Other Pvt Indian	S. San San S. San San Sa	
Unidentified	7,38,000	4.86
	6,60,000	4.34
Baja) Tata	4.16.000	2.74
Kothari	4,00,000	2.63
Goenka	3,80,000	2.5
Bombay Dyeing	2,66,000	1.75
Bollion Dieling	2.60,000	1.71
Khatau .	2,20,000	1.44
TVS	2,06,000	1.35
JK	1,90,000	1.25
Modi	1,87,000	1.71
TTK	1,80,000	1.18
Oberoi	1.74,000	1.14
Reliance	1,70,000	1.12
Escorts	1,62,000	1.06
Firodia_	1,32,000	0.86
Sriram	1,24,000	0.81
Mafatlal	1,20,000	0.79
Piramal	1,06,000	0.69
Somani	1,00,000	0.65
Bangur	82,000	0.51
Hero	80,000	0.52
KL	80,000	0 52
Abro	42,000	0.27
Kirloskar	38,000	0.215

Source, -*The data has been collected from Sunday from January, 1986 to June, 1987.

Note:—The Calculations were made on the basis of the Advertisement tariffs provided by Press advertisers Year Book.

TABLE 5

The Week

Group	Expenditure	Percentage
Foreign	6,82,504	22.985
Pyt Indian	5,08,609	17.127
Govt	2,81,087.5	9.466
MM	1,63,124	5,493
TTK	1,47,862.5	4.979
Other Pvt Indian	30000000000000000000000000000000000000	
Unidentified	1,12,500	3,788
Bajaj	97,500	3.283
Godrej	90,425	3.045
Tata	77,425	2.610
Reliance	74,375	2.504
Birlas	67,300	2.266
TVS	66,250	2.231
Piramal	61,250	2.062
Rallys	58,250	1.961
Thapar	57,500	1.936
Escorts	54,080	1.821
Bombay Dyeing	53,750	1.81
loint	45,000	1.515
Mafatlal .	45,000	1.515

undation Chennai and eGangotri	39,688	1.336
Kalpataru	37,500	1.262
Balsara	37,750	1.271
	31.875	1.073
JK Kirloskar	38,896	1.31
Khatau	24,600	0.828
Sriram	7.541.5	0.256
Modi	1.675	0.056
Firodia	7,500	0.252
Titouia		

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Source: -*The data has been collected from the Week from January, 1986 to June, 1987.

Note:—The Calculations were made based on the avertisement tariffs provided by Press and Advertisers Year Book.

TABLE 6
Shares of Big Business Houses

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Group	India Today	Weekly	Sunday	Week
Birlas	4.413	3.51	6.218	2.266
Tatas	4.622	5.84	2.74	2.610
Thapar	2,249	0.73	3.04	1.936
Singhania	3.077	2.17	1.25	1.073
Reliance	2.081	1.31	1.12	2.504
Mafatlal	1.141	1.36	0.79	1.515
Modi	1.024	1.29	-1.23	0.056
Bangur			0.54	_
Bajaj	3.201	6.46	4.84	3.283
Walchand	0.951			
Sriram	1.259	0.97	0.81	0.254
TVS	0.654	2.77	1.35	2.231
Kirloskar	0.716	0.867	0.215	1.31
M.M.	0.604	0.32	- 0,213	5.493
171.171.	0.004	0.52		3.4

TABLE 7

Share of the National and Foreign Monopoly Capital in the Advertising Revenue of the Top Four National News Magazines

	Foreign Companies	Top Two	Top Five
India Today	22,492	9.015	16,422
Illustrated Weekly	23.246	9.35	13,560
Sunday	32.347	8.958	14.368
The Week	22.985	4.876	10.339

Avijit Pathak: Religion

(Contd. from page 25)

experience what the constraints of history have deprived him of.

It was what Karl Marx attempted, because as the young Marx wrote in 1844: "Communism is the genuine resolution of the conflict between man and nature and between man and man — the true resolution of the strife between existence and essence, between objectification and self confirmation, between freedom and necessity, between the individual and the species. Communism is the riddle of history solved, and it knows itself to be this solution." How is it then possible for a religious soul to overlook the supremely noble endeayour Marx initiated?

Essentially, we need a dialogue. Because a religious journey is a socio-historical journey too, an attempt to transcend the constraints of history while living in it. And when a saint and a revolutionary, a mystic and a communist, a prophet and an activist embrace one another, history begins to alter itself. A new religion is born, a new politics created. And a new man begins to sing the music of love and harmony.

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Soviet Union and Iran-Iraq Dispute (1968-1975)

MAHMOUD GHAFOURI

A LTHOUGH the Iran-Iraq dispute ostensibly centred on an ancient riverine conflict, it reflected a much wider competitive relationship. The Iraqis were engaged in subversive activities in Iran and supported opposition groups, notably in province of Khuzistan which they called "Arabistan". In fact Baghdad was the headquarter of a movement the declared aim of which was to detach Khuzistan province from Iran.1 In turn Iran was supporting the Kurdish rebellion in north of Iraq. It was evident that Iran had extended military assistance to the Kurds in their struggle for autonomy from

Baghdad.

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Despite subsequent confirmation of US material aid to Kurds via the CIA and Iran, Soviet reactions were restrained. The Soviets reflected the knowledge of this covert assistance and emphasised that the aim was to "weaken the progressive regime of Iraq" and to "slow down the national liberation process developing" by detaching Iraq "from its real friends above all, from the Soviet Union".2 In fact the USSR went to great lengths to ignore the link between the Iran-Iraq dispute and the Kurdish rebellion. The border conflict was itself sufficiently embarrassing for the USSR which thus refrained from commenting on Iran's activities behind the Kurdish revolt. Thus the Soviets found it better to simply ignore the Iranian role.3 Indeed in only one occasion was the Iranian media (along with the Turkish mediay criticised for publicising reports aimed at inciting the readers and "increase the tense domestic situation in Iraq".4

As for the Soviet policy towards the Iran-Iraq border conflict, the Soviet Union adopted the position of a concerned but impartial observer. The Soviet media often frankly observed that:

The USSR enjoys sincere, friendly and comprehensive relations with both Iran and Iraq. Consequently the Soviet people have a great interest in seeing the normalisation of relations between their friends in the Middle East and the establishment of cooperation and good-neighbourly relations between them.5

Soviet observers claimed that the Soviet Union had traditionally held that "border disputes and other differences between countries should be solved by negociations. by peaceful means". They further asserted that "the Soviet public firmly believes that there are no differences believes that there are rences between Iran and Iraq that cannot be peacefully solved. fully solved. Indeed Moscow assumed that prolonged dispute ran counter to the interests of both

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states and only served the interests of the West. It was further asserted that the Soviet Union tried to encourage the solution of conflicts by peaceful means. Therefore, the USSR considered "these border clashes between the two countries improper and unjustified". In fact in reaction to any renewal of fighting, the Soviet media often used such phrases as "regrettable" and "saddens the Soviet people". while in reaction to any move to settle the dispute through peaceful means words such as "praiseworthy" and "admirable" were used. The Soviet people were said to have received such developments with "pleasure and happiness".

Despite the fact that the Soviet-Iraqi Treaty of Friendship contained a clause on defense cooperation (para 9), Moscow reassured Iran time and again that the treaty was not directed against any third party. At the time of its second anniversary while the relations between Iran and Iraq further deteriorated. the Soviets again reassured Iran that the treaty "did not pose a threat to the legitimate interest of

anybody".7

President Podgorny expressed Soviet exasperations with the continued conflict on November 18, 1974 when the Shah of Iran visited Moscow. He pointed to the Asian collective security proposal in the context of the Iran-Iraq border conflict and noted that conflicts anywhere in Asia including the Persian Gulf area jeopardised general peace.8 He said:

We must say outright that the tension existing in relations between Iran and Iraq is not in the interest of peace and we have declared and declare in favour of Iranian-Iraqi differences being settled by those countries themselves at a conference table on the basis of principle of peaceful coexistance and good-neighbourliness. We shall be welcoming constructive steps which. we hope will be made by the sides in quest of the way for a peaceful settlement of the questions in dispute.9

Immediately thereafter, Podgorny once again went onto discuss the Asian collective security proposal.

The Soviet Union remained impartial but a concerned observer during the Iran-Iraq border dispute. rather than taking sides in favour of one of the warring sides. The USSR counselled restraint and encouraged both sides to settle the dispute through peaceful means. This Soviet response was motivated by the fact that the USSR had a great deal to lose by taking sides in the conflict. Moscow well appreciated that if she was to support one side over the other, she would run the risk of not only deteriorating her own relations with the side deprived of Soviet support, but there was also considerable likelihood

MAINSTREAM April 15, 1989

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to the West or the People's Republic of China (PRC). Thus the Soviets would not really gain much by supporting one side or the other. So the "cost of taking sides clearly outweighed any gains which might have been secured". Consequently, the Soviets clearly felt that the best approach to the conflict was to adopt the role of a concerned but impartial observer who constantly encouraged the antagonists to solve their

differences through peaceful means.10 By the end of 1974 and the beginning of 1975 hostilities between the two countries escalated and two Iraqi planes were shot down by Iran which extended substantial assistance including artillery support to the Kurds. Despite the efforts by Baghdad to cut Kurdish supply lines from Iran in late-1974, the lines remained open and the Kurds received substantial material aid from Iran. Failing to defeat the Kurds and before the war expanded further, a diplomatic solution was reached and an agreement was signed by the Shah and Saddam Hussein in Algiers on March 7, 1975 whereby Iran undertook to terminate her support to the Kurds. Iraq in turn agreed to Iran's demands regarding the Iran-Iraq border dispute. Following this, the Kurdish revolt collapsed and before Iran closed the border many Kurds escaped to Iran. The agreement settled complex questions regarding the border conflict, defined navigation rights in Arvand River (Shatt Ol-Arab) and brought an end to Iranian support to the Kurds.12

The Soviet media's analysis of the implications of the Iran-Iraq agreement on the events in Kurdistan was virtually nil. Only on one occasion did the Soviet media, citing a Lebanese newspaper as its source of information, link the two.13 The Iran-Iraq settlement, though welcomed because it defused a crisis, was also disturbing to the USSR because it was reached without Soviet foreknowledge (despite the fact that the Soviet-Iraqi Treaty of Friendship contained a clause — para 7 — on regular consultations between the two countries on important international issues affecting the interests of both sides) and involved substantial concessions, the foremost being Iraq's agreement to terminate support for revolutionary movements in the Persian Gulf region.14

On March 19, 1975 Radio Moscow reminded its listeners about the proposed Asian collective security system, eliminating any doubt that the Soviet Union did not intend to link the Iran-Iraqi agreement with the proposed system. The commentator asserted that the necessity to establish the collective security system in Asia, "applies to countries like Iran and Iraq". 15 So the agreement between Iran and Iraq was clearly interpreted within the collective security proposal framework.

The Soviet use of the collective security proposal as a framework for analysis of Iran Iraq agreement was perhaps indicative of future Soviet responses to discourage regional disputes. In this case both the countries have been linked to the proposal earlier. By linking the Iran-Iraq agreement to the proposed security system the Soviets attempted to attain at least two objectives. First, the Soviets wanted to show that how the two states which have already been linked

of the side thus deprived of Soviet support turning Foundation steep oscale stang-could work within the spirit of and therefore to show that the principles underlying the system could reduce regional tensions. Simultane ously it illustrated the desirability of establishing the system. They also felt that such application of the principles underlying the proposed system may accelerate the establishment of the system itself. Second, the introduction of the system into the discussion of Iran-Iraq dispute might have been a way through which Moscow attempted to remain aloof from what was clearly an embarrassment for the USSR since the two the Soviet Union's regional antagonists were friends.16

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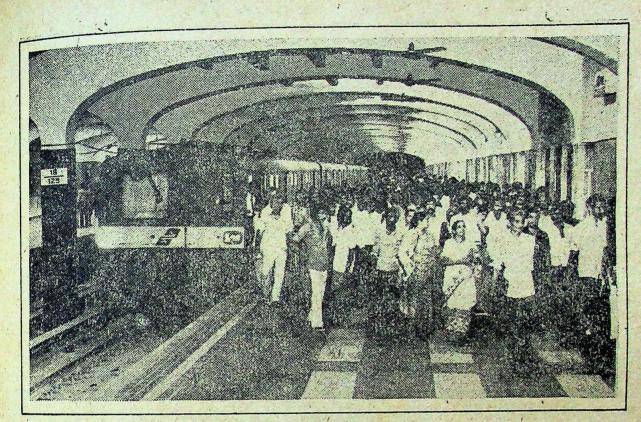
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DEAR COMMUTERS WE ARE PROUD OF YOU!

Whilst on the subject of urban transport, I would like to complement the people of Calcutta, in their manner of use, and in their cooperation towards the maintenance of the Metro railway and its various installations. It is a shining example of the benefits that can accrue to all concerned from a responsible and enlightened user

(Railway Budget speech of Shri Madhavrao Scindia, Hon'ble Minister of State for Railway in Parliament on February 24, 1988)



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METRO RAILWAY
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MAINSTREAM April 15. 1989

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In a Train

PRIENDS often ask me: When do you read? My life seems pretty full of various activities, some useful perhaps, others of a doubtful utility. It is not easy to make friends with books and live in their charmed world when the horrid business of politics consumes our youth and eats up our days and nights which under a better dispensation, would be given to happier pursuits. Yet even in this dreary round I try to find a little time at night to read some book that is far removed from politics. I do not succeed always. But most of my reading takes place in railway trains as I journey to and fro across this vast land.

A third class or an intermediate class compartment is not an ideal place to read in or do any work. But the invariable friendliness of my fellow-travellers and the courtesy of railway officials make a difference and I am afraid I cannot pretend to experiencing all the discomforts of such travelling. Others insist on my having more than my fair share of space, and many acts of courtesy give a pleasant human touch to the journey. Not that I love discomfort or seek it. Nor do I indulge in travelling third class because there is any virtue in it or principle involved. The main consideration is one of rupees, annas and pies. The diffe rence in third class and second class fares is so great that only dire necessity induces me to indulge in the luxury of second-class travel.

In the old days, a dozen years ago, I used to write a great deal while travelling, chiefly letters dealing with Congress work. Repeated experience of various railway lines made me judge them from the point of view of facility of writing on them. I think I gave first place to the East Indian Railway; the North Western was fair; but the G.I. P. Railway was definitely bad and shook one thoroughly. Why this was 50 I do not know, nor do I know why fares should differ so greatly between the different railway companies. all under state control. Here again the G. I. P. Railway stands out as one of the most expensive and it will not even issue ordinary return tickets.

I have given up the habit of writing much in a train. Perhaps my body is less flexible now and cannot adjust itself so well as it used to to the shaking and jolting of a moving train. But I carry a box full of books with me on my journeys, taking always far more than I can possibly read. It is a comforting feeling to have books around one even though one may not read.

This journey was going to be a long one, to far Karachi, almost, it seemed to me after my air journeys half-way to Europe. So my box was well filled with a variety of books. I started off, as was my wont, in an intermediate-class compartment. But at Lahore, the next day, fearful and terrifying accounts of the heat and the dust on the way weakened my resolve and I promoted myself to the luxuries of second-class travel. Thus travelling in style and moderate comfort I went across the Sind desert. It was as well that did so for even in our closely shuttered compartment clouds of fine dust streamed in through all manner of crevices and covered us layer upon layer, and made the air heavy to breathe. I thought of the third class and shuddered. I can stand heat and much else but dust I find much more difficult to tolerate.

Among the books I read on the long journey was one about a remarkable and unusual man, Edward Wilson, lover of birds and animals and comrade unto death of Scott in the Antarctic regions. The book had a double appeal for me for it had come to me from yet another remarkable man. It was a gift from A. G. Fraser, for long principal of the Achimota College in West Africa, that noble and unique monument of African education which he had built up with labour and sympathy and affection.

The sandy, inhospitable desert of Sind passed by as the train sped along, and I read of the Antarctic regions and of man's gallant fight against the elements, of human courage that conquered mighty naturally of endurance almost beyond helical at the elements, of human courage that conquered mighty naturally of endurance almost beyond helical at the elements, of human courage that conquered mighty naturally of endurance almost beyond helical at the elements, of human courage that conquered mighty naturally of endurance almost beyond helical at the elements. itself, of endurance almost beyond belief. And of high endeavour and loyalty to comrades and forgetful ness of self and good humour in the face of every conceivable misfortune. And why? Not for any advantage to the persons conceived not every conceivable misfortune. advantage to the persons concerned, not even obviously for the public good or the marked benefit science. Why then? Simply because of the daring that is in man, the spirit that will not submit always seeks to mount higher and higher the call that always seeks to mount higher and higher the call that always seeks to mount higher and higher the call that always seeks to mount higher and higher the call that always seeks to mount higher and higher the call that always seeks to mount higher and higher the call that always seeks to mount higher and higher the call that always seeks to mount higher and higher the call that always seeks to mount higher and higher the call that always seeks to mount higher the call that always seeks to mount higher the call that always seeks to mount higher the call that the call the call that the c always seeks to mount higher and higher, the call that comes from the stars. Most of us are deaf to the call but it is well that a few hear it and ennoble our present generation. call but it is well that a few hear it and ennoble our present generation. To them life is a continual challenge a long adventure a testing of their challenge, a long adventure, a testing of their worth:

I count life just a stuff

To try the soul's strength on...

Such a one was Edward Wilson and it is well that after having reached the South Pole, he and it mannions lay down for their final rest in those west A wing reached the South Pole, he and it companions lay down for their final rest in those vast Antarctic regions where the long day follows and long night and silence reigns. There they lie surrounded by increasing the long day follows long night and silence reigns. There they lie surrounded by immeasurable expanses of snow and ice, over them the hand of man has put up a fitting inscription:

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To strive, to seek, to find and the five specific oundation Chennal and eGangotri

The Poles have been conquered, the deserts surveyed, the high mountains have yielded to man, though The Poles have gielded to man, though the Everest still remains proud and unvanquished. But man is persistent and Everest will have to bow to the his puny body has a mind that recognises no bounds and a serial of the serial state. Everest still Telliand production of the purple of the pur him, for his puny body line and smaller and smaller and romance and knightly adventure seem then, what remains? The earth becomes smaller and smaller and romance and knightly adventure seem at of it. We are even told that a fight to the Pole may be a common to the pole may be a com then, what remains the are even told that a fight to the Pole may be a common occurrence before long. And to go out of it. We are even told that a fight to the Pole may be a common occurrence before long. And the mountains have funiculars running up their sides and luxury hotels at the top where jazz bands break the mountains have remained and mock the eternal silence of the snows, and dull middle-aged people play the stillness of the night and bored and blase young people and old seek pleasure feverishly, and seek it

And yet, adventure is always there for the adventurous, and the wide world still beckons to those who have courage and spiri, and the stars hurl their challenge across the skies. Need one go to the Poles or the deserts or the mountains for adventure when the adventure of life is there for all who care? What a mess we have made of this life of ours and of human society, and with plenty and joy and a free development of the human spirit open to us, we yet starve in misery and have our spirits crushed in a slavery worse than that of old. Let us do our bit to change this so that human beings may become worthy of their great inheritance and make their lives full of beauty and joy and the things of the spirit. The adventure of life beckons and it is the greatest adventure of all.

The desert is covered with darkness but the train rushes on to its appointed goal. So also perhaps humanity is stumbling along though the night is dark and the goal hidden from us. Soon the day will come and instead of the desert there will be the blue-green sea to greet us.

Jawaharlah Nehm

(Modern Review: August 1936)

P.N. HAKSAR

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MAINETREAM April 15, 1989

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Be a "NEHRU YATRI" "DISCOVER INDIA" by RAIL

On the occasion of the birth centenary celebrations of the first Prime Minister of India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Southern Railway has launched "Nehru Yatri" tourist ticket, a special concessional offer for round tour journeys linking historical cities and destinations all over the country.

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Issued by :

Chief Public Relations Officer, Southern Railway, Madras-600 003

A Train Journey

K.R. NARAYANAN

To travel by train in India is a liberal education, often a revolutionary one. I have wondered why those who talk so much about national integration have not given a thought to this moving, shaking, rattling medium for their noble purpose. After all. every god and every goddess has a vehicle in our transcendent mythology. Is not the train the ideal vehicle for whatever gods be that shape national

integration in our land?

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There in a railway compartment, third class of course, you see all the jarring unity and the harmonious differences of our country. And through its moving windows you get unforgettable glimpses of the face, the heart and even the behind of India. A train journey starts in that hideously disorderly state of nature which has been the nightmare of political philosophers. There is the war of everyone against shouting, swearing, pushing, jostling, an uncontrolled exhibition of raw selfishness and rude aggressiveness. And then the locomotive is in motion and suddenly the spirit of co-existence descends over the compartment, turning the quarrelling crowd into an amiable community. One would have thought that Rousseau got his idea of the "Social Contract" after a ride in a third class compartment of an Indian train. And Marx his theory of proletarian socialism. Everything in the compartment seems to belong to everyone food, beddings, newspapers, books, and even your inmost secrets are bared to the irresistible curiosity and the interfering friendliness of your fellow-travellers. Theorists of international relations would be surprised to observe how fast this railway community arrives at the concept of sovereignty and develops a furious sense of self-preservation against all intruding commuters trying to enter the compartment armed with valid tickets. Even the Central Government could take lessons in nationalism and socialism

from this humble third class compartment. One incident stands out in my mind. I was travelling from Madras to Delhi. I had with me a Penguin edition of Somerset Maugham's Painted Veil with a provocative picture of the sinful heroine of that novel on the cover page. Hardly had I begun to read when a grey-haired Professor of Economics hailing from Mysore sitting opposite me asked politely if he could have a leading opposite me asked politely if he could have a look at the book. I handed the Painted Veil over to him and waited patiently for him to give it back to man and waited patiently for him to give it back to me. But the Professor got himself instantaneously absorbed in the novel and, oblivious of even my existence my existence, would not take his eyes off the book.

My fellow-man would not take his eyes off the book. My fellow passengers cast covetous glances at him,

Science and Technology.

jealous of the secret pleasure he was sucking out of the pages of Maugham. I did not have the heart to disturb him and at the next station I bought another paperback to occupy myself. It was only at night when I had climbed up to the upper berth for sleep that the Professor returned the book to me after having finished reading it. I felt excited as if I had been given an unexpected gift. Hardly had I begun to read the Painted Veil again when another amiable fellow-traveller, who was reclining on his upper berth, asked whether he could borrow the book. That was the limit and I told him that I brought the book along for reading in the train. He then enquired with utmost delicacy whether I owned the book. I said 'yes' and pat came the answer: "Then what's hurry, you can read it after you reach Delhi." I was annaged, I was irritated, but it did not take very long before the extraordinary logic of that remark sank into my mind, and I handed over the novel to him and went to sleep lulled by the sense of having had a fleeting vision of true socialism.

A railway journey is not just an essay in ideology but an experience in poetry and romance. Who can pass over the rivers of India with such beautiful names - Ganga, Jamuna, Godavari, Narmada Krishna, Kaveri - without growing nostalgic about our dim past and without wishing that there was someone in the train - some agent of national integration - at least to identify the rivers and the cities, the heroes and heroines of our history associated with the places we pass through. And how lovely India looks through the moving train windows in the soft, shy moonlight, how mysterious in the deep darkness, and how gorgeous in the sunrise, though by the vision of defecating human beings

along the endless railway lines.

There is something else I recollect often in the tranquility of my mind. The train was stopping at a crossing, humming and steaming with impatience. It was sunset time and the evening sky flushed with colour. Against that enchanting backdrop a she-buffalo, a well-fed brown beauty, was standing motionless, while the he-buffalo, in an almost ultra-modern amorous move, put his nose to her, lifted his dazed head and inhaled the urinal fragrance against the evening sky, with the air of a Shah Jehan smelling a half-opened rose thinking of the lovely Mumtaz Mahal. As the train moved along and the vision passed I murmured to myself the words of Keats: "The poetry of the earth is not dead." Certainly not when you travel in a train in

(Reproduced from the author's book, Images and

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Indian Railways— the non-stop-watch of the economy.

Railways started ticking 135 years ago... and ever since, the network has been ticking round-the-clock, round-the-year.

From Jaisalmer to Lumding, from Kanyakumari to Jammu Tawi, the Railways provide vital supplies... foodgrains and consumer goods to the people, raw materials and finished goods for the industry. Linking coal mines to power plants. Bringing fertilisers to farmers. Moving foreign exchange earning export cargo. Servicing the "Temples" of modern India.

Bulk goods and long haul is Railway's staple freight:

1987-88	(III MIMON COLUMN)	1988-89 (Target)	
119 00	Coal	125.00	
29.89	Foodgrains	30.00	
	Raw Material for	12	
24 85	Steel Plants	27.00	
21.82	POL	22.00	
22.25	Cement	23.50	
13.04	Iron Ore for Export	14.50	
13.15	Fertilizers	14.50	
9.90	Steel	10.50	
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Transporting people and goods is a ceaseless operation.
Indeed, Railways is the non-stop-watch of the country...
ticking all the way, all the time.



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Achievements and Prospects

MADHAVRAO SCINDIA

The following are the replies of Madhavrao Scindia, the Union Minister of State for Railways, to questions asked by Mainstream on the functioning of the Railways.

Q: What have been the thrust and priorities of your programme, for improvement of the Indian Railways since you took over as the Union Minister of State for Railways at the fag end of 1984? You have made the Railways financially viable and presented this year the fifth surplus Railway budget. What is the secret of your success as the Railway Minister? This year being the terminal year of the Seventh Five Year Plan what is your assessment of the performance of the Railways in the Seventh Plan period?

MS: The thrust of the Seventh Plan was towards the rehabilitation and modernisation of the system, optimisation of asset utilisation and increase in staff productivity. Significant strides have been made

in each of the thrust areas.

The railway system was in urgent need of rehabilitation and modernisation. As many as 20,000 kilometres of track needed renewal. A large fleet of rolling stock was due for condemnation and replacement. By concentrating on these aspects by allocation of adequate resources, it was possible to build up the system to take care of the traffic offering. In the first four years of the Seventh Plan we could complete 15,846 kilometres of track renewals against the target of 19,000 kilometres for the entire Seventh Plan. In 1987-88 an all-time record of 4540 kilometres of track renewals was set. On similar lines the rejuvenation of the fleet was attempted and completed. Correspondingly, the condemnation of steam locomotives and the induction of diesel and electric locomotives paid rich dividends in terms of performance. Attention to rehabilitation of the signalling and telecommunication assets was yet another thrust area. This helped to achieve allfound progress on many fronts. The following figures illustrate the position:

Item Originas:	Performance in '85-86	Performance in '88-89	Target for VII Plan (1989-90)
Originating Freight loading Wagon utilisation (NTKM per wagon per day)	286mt	332mt	345mt
Frack renewals Rly, Electrification	1296 3578 461	1450 15,946 2458	1350 19,000 3400

In the first three years of the Seventh Plan, freight traffic went up by 27 per cent and passenger kilometres by 19 per cent in spite of only marginal addition of 0.9 per cent to track network and in fact a slight reduction in the number of wagons, coaching fleet and locomotives. The Net Tonne Kilometres per Wagon per Day, an internationally accepted index of wagon capacity utilisation, went up by 26 per cent (BG) and 29 per cent (MG). Similarly, the staff productivity in terms of traffic units moved per employee increased by 22 per cent.

The accent on rehabilitation and modernisation also helped to improve the reliability of equipment. The performance of locomotives, coaches and wagons improved considerably. The following figures

are relevant:

Year	BG Electric Loco- motives (NTKMs per Engine Day in lakhs)	Availability of Locomotives (BG Electric)	Availability of Rolling stock (BG)
1985-86	2.52	80.3%	94.8%
1988-89	2.75	83.5%	95.6%
1989-90	2.90	84.0%	96.0%

In achieving this phenomenal progress the role played by the railway family needs special mention. Their discipline and dedication needs special mention.

Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi has, on several occasions, commended this achievement of the railway family, which has further boosted our morale. Without the sincere and disciplined efforts of the 17 lakh strong railway family from the gateman to the General Manager and the clerk to the Chairman, Railway Board, this achievement of breaking records year after year in all aspects of rail operations would not have been possible.

Q: As the Railway Minister you are playing a key role in the current modernisation drive of the Indian Railways. Could you kindly spell out the principal objectives of the railway modernisation programme? What have been the achievements so far on this score? What would be the impact of the railway modernisation drive on the Indian economy?

M.S. In the current Plan, the Railways have achieved unprecedented levels in the utilisation of

the existing infrastructure. At the same time a new oundation Chennehand resignmentatives are you cooperating level of buoyancy in our economy is projecting an ever-increasing demand on rail transport. Keeping in view the vital role that is expected of the network, technological progressions have already been initiated in all important areas like high horsepower locomotives, light-weight high speed passenger coaches, wagons with heavier axle load, wagon bogie design, improved track structure, modern signalling and telecommunication network and workshop modernisation. Emphasis has also been laid on improving the managerial and technical skills of our workforce to enable them to use hi-tech equipment, and also bring about additional changes side by side. In this march towards self-reliance, the Research Design and Standards Organisation (RDSO) of the Railways at Lucknow is being re-structured to meet the challenges.

Under direction from the Prime Minister, an R&D Master Plan involving Rs 280 crores has been taken on hand for capital investment in railway related research, to make the Indian Railways leaders in some important areas of railway technology. Key technology areas have been identified and missionoriented synergy groups set up, involving the RDSO, the private sector industry, and centres of advance learning like the IITs and some reputed universities. To give an example, the tare weight of Box-N wagon is being reduced by about 2½ tonnes, thereby increasing the carrying capacity by about four per cent. Research and Design Cells are also being set up in each of the production units like the Diesel Locomotive Works at Varanasi, the Chittaranjan Locomotive Works, etc. to bring about innovative changes at shop levels.

The Railways are a very major user of energy. Great stress has been laid on energy conservation and in 1987-88, a five per cent reduction in consumption of energy (in terms of coal equivalent units per thousand GTKMs) was achieved resulting in the saving of nearly Rs 60 crores. Similar results have also been achieved in 1988-89. Energy auditing and monitoring at the highest level have already

yielded good results.

Another area is the use of computer aids on the system. Computerised passenger reservation systems have been introduced in the metropolitan cities of Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. The second phase of the project will cover Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Bhopal, Lucknow and Secunderabad within this year. In the third phase, 20 more stations will be covered which will take care of nearly 70 per cent of the total reservation in India. A Freight Operating Information System is under examination to be introduced in stages and is expected to save 15 to 20 per cent in wagon inputs, when implemented.

The impact of these modernisation measures, as I foresee, would be in better and safer rail travel, less transport constraints and reduction in unit cost of freight in real terms. The improvements in some areas have already become obvious in terms of sustained record freight movement in all the years of the Seventh Plan, and a level of wagon utilisation which is the best in the world, surpassing even that of Japan.

with in your drive for modernisation of the Indian Railways? Could you kindly elaborate on the subject? You had, during your visit to the USSR last year. held extensive discussions with your Soviet counters part on this subject. In what way are the Soviets going to help us in this area? Are you also seeking assistance from the US, France and Japan in this

MS: The Ministry of Railways has entered into protocols and Memoranda of Understanding with the Governments of the USSR and France and with the Australian National Railway Commission, West German Railways and Mexican Railways, for mutual benefit. Bilateral cooperation is envisaged with the to

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Governments of Algeria and Turkey also.

The objectives outlined are for upgradation and transfer of technology in selected areas, and undertaking joint consultancy and construction projects in

third countries.

Japanese and French railway experts are already assisting us in conducting pre-feasibility surveys and studies for modernisation. I may add that we are also exporting management expertise through the IRCON and the RITES. In the Eighth Plan, we will be laying special emphasis on export of equipment also.

The USSR has shown interest in the proposals for the Metro railway system for Delhi but these have to be crystallised and presented to them. The Ministry of Urban Development which is the nodal Ministry for this is taking the necessary steps.

In the area of workshop modernisation we intend

to seek assistance from Japan.

Q: You are presently concentrating on the development of freight traffic presumably out of economic compulsions. What would be the effect of the railway modernisation drive on the freight traffic? You have, in this Railway Budget, increased the rates of goods and parcel traffic by more than 11 per cent. There is widespread apprehension of its chain effect in terms of boosting inflation. In the light of such fears, there is a feeling that perhaps the step could have been avoided and the necessary demands of the situation met by enhanced efficiency, something you have been able to achieve in a fairly reasonable degree in different spheres of the Railways. How would you respond to such an observation?

MS: Freight traffic is very important for the national as well as the Railways' economy. The passenger traffic is cross-subsidised by the freight traffic. Also movement of freight is an all-important factor in the sustenance and growth of the country This should, however, not detract from the need for or importance of facilities for passenger traffic.

The Railways are the principal mode of transport for haulage of materials and essential commodities in bulk over long distances. We have to concentrate on further growth of freight traffic on which depends the public distribution system, running of powel houses and the growth of agriculture and industry But modernisation is meant to serve both freight traffic as well as passenger traffic.

Modernisation will increase productivity, improve reliability and present a proper image of our railway

RAILWAY MINISTER EXPLAINS

'Motivation': Key to Success

Whatever success has been achieved in the last few years in the working of the Indian Railways I will attribute, to a very large extent, to the motivation that now exists in the railway team. We are working as one team towards a common goal with complete harmony and understanding between all the members of the team and perfect harmony in labour relations. The unions too have exhibited a very positive attitude. As you well know, last year a record bonus was distributed and this year even that bonus was surpassed.

It was very gratifying that the Honourable Prime Minister fully endorsed the bonus distributed last year of 44 days on the grounds that the railway family had put their best foot forward and that the staff and officers had truly contributed to a great improvement in the working of the Railways. We are all greatly encouraged by this.

So, to a very great extent, I attribute this performance to the motivation that exists in the Indian Railways and the very positive contribution made by the railway officers and the railway staff right from the juniormost level. It is an attitudinal change that we have tried to bring about and that has contributed to whatever success that has been achieved in the Indian Railways.

Q: But how did this attitudinal change come about? Through leadership, monitoring?

MS: Well, what we tried to do was to:

(a) greate a feeling of belonging, a feeling of price in one's organisation; and (b) convey a very clear message to railway officers and railway staff that, to use a Hindi term, there will be no bhai bhatijavad, that the meritorious will be rewarded, that as far as the officers are concerned the postings and promotions will be done on merit and not on sufarish and those who deserve will be provided the opportunity to improve their careers. Equally, the converse is applicable. That message has also gone out loud and clear.

I feel that the railway officers and staff have now developed confidence in that they will be given fair treatment on merit by their superiors at whatever level.

Q: My question was that there must have been a leadership. Hypothetically speaking, suppose you leave the Ministry tomorrow will formance the day after?

MS: It is very nice of you to have said this but I am not claiming credit for this. In fact two Chairmen of the Railway Board have retired in my period of Ministership. And I remember on the retirement of the last Chairman, Mr Prakash Narain, I had paid tribute to his tenure. While paying compliments to him and time said that all of us are temporary, we come

and we will have to go, some day; and the true measure of the success of our contribution to the Indian Railways will be if after we go the Railways do not miss us. I remember I had said this. While expressing my appreciation to Mr Prakash Narain I had said that though I feel we will miss you, it is only if we do not miss you that the real tribute to your contribution would have been made. And that is equally applicable to me or to anyone else in the Indian Railways.

We have to make our contribution during our tenures to an organisation which is continuing in an ongoing process and maybe the beneficial effects of the contributions we make today would really be felt in the two years or three years time when we may not even be there.

Q: This brings me to another question. The Railways being a government organisation have been able to show very good results. Normally the public sector is at the receiving end not being able to play an efficient, purposeful role in the situation. How could the performance of the Railways be emulated by the public sector organisations?

MS: I think the essential element in the success of an organisation like the Railways which have a strength of 1.7 million people has to rest on man-motivation. There is no point in making massive investments in modernisation, in machines and equipment, in the new electric technology, in the new diesel technology, if the man behind the machine is going to do merely a routine day's work without any element of motivation in his attitude. Therefore, it is the team spirit that has to be inculcated for the success of the exercise.

Now there are many public sector units which are capital intensive. This may not be applicable to them. But as far as the Railways are concerned and in similar labour intensive organisations, it has to ultimately be a spirit which is manifested by staff concerns. That is why I have always given credit in the main for whatever success has been achieved to the contribution of the staff and the officers.

And that is, I would say, the critical element between success and failure. I am not saying that it is the only element. If you give them bullock carts to work with and not tractors then however motivated they may be there is a limitation to what they can achieve. It has to go in tandem. There have to also be modernisations, improvement in technology, improvement in equipment. But all this will be to no avail if staff motivation and staff support is not there. So, therefore, this becomes a critical point.

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(From tape-recorded interview of Madhav-rao Scindia granted to Sumii Chakravartty, Special Correspondent of Mainstream, on April 5, 1989)

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system to the outside world. The carriage of freight would be faster and safer. The use of modern rolling stock coupled with modern concepts of operation like heavy-haul traffic would increase productivity and reduce costs.

Some increase in freight rates was unavoidable in the interest of the financial health of the railway system and the economy of the country. The alter-

natives before us were:

(i) not to increase tariff and default on dividend payable to the General Revenues, and thus pass on the burden to the Central Exchequer - leading to more deficit financing, which brings inflationery pressures; or

(ii) work out a smaller Railway Plan (this alternative was not acceptable, as it would have affected all projects set in motion for rehabilitation, modernisation and system expansion); or

(iii) to face up to the reality, and generate sufficient internal resources to meet the dividend obligations, as also maintain the Railway Plan at a reasonable level.

I selected the third which to my mind was the

most sensible option.

The direct impact of the increase in freight rates on WPI is only 0.3 per cent and, after taking into account the cascading effect, the impact on WPI is

about 0.54 per cent.

In the first four years of the Seventh Plan, input costs went up by an annual average of 13 per cent. The increase in fare and freight rates has been about eight per cent. Thus, five per cent out of 13 per cent, which is 38 per cent of the increase in input costs, was absorbed by the system. At the same time, the Railways have contributed more to the Plan through

the generation of internal resources.

O: The Indian Railways have been planning meaningful expansion of the railway network and the target is to carry 500 million tonnes of freight by the turn of the century (at present the annual freight traffic accounts for 332 million tonnes as per the 1988-89 figure; and this is expected to account for 345 million tonnes in 1989-90). By the Eighth Five Year Plan period the modernisation and rehabilitation programmes of the Railways are due to be completed. Several options are learnt to be envisaged on the question of expansion of the Railways and the Railway Ministry in conjunction with the Planning Commission is currently engaged in an exercise on finalising the details of schemes to be embarked upon. Are you in a position to throw some insight into the exercise for the benefit of our readers who are doubtless interested in the subject?

MS: While introducing the Railway Budget for 1989-90, I had mentioned that a stage has now come when some emphasis will also have to be laid on the expansion of the network, but appropriate arrangements for funding would be required. This expansion would include opening of new routes to develop additional line capacity, to construct project oriented lines, to open some backward areas for rapid economic development and to lay more broad gauge track

by way of doubling or conversion.

An Expert Committee (Menezes Committee) under the auspices of the Planning Commission has gone

Digitized by Arya Samai Foundation Chennai and eGangotri recommended a plan for expansion at an accelerated rate to meet the volume of traffic demand expected at the turn of the century

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As far as modernisation of the system is concerned, this is an ongoing process and cannot be said to be complete in the Eighth or even the Ninth Plan.

Of course, I must say that whereas I agree that transport is essential for development, it need not always be rail transport. We have to look for the most economic and cost-effective mode of transport

in a resource-constraint situation.

O: You are increasing the number of superfast trains on the same railway track. The experience of other countries has been that when the number of superfast trains is increased on the same track they take priority over goods trains and other passenger trains whose speeds get decreased as a result. How are you planning to meet this problem?

MS: The construction of a dedicated track for superfast trains requires enormous investment. For example, it has been estimated that such a track between Delhi and Kanpur would need an investment of about Rs 2000 crores. This option has, therefore, received a low priority in view of resource con-Within the available capacity we try to straints. strike a judicious balance between the needs of freight and passenger trains and utilise the capacity to the optimum level. The time-tables are made keeping in view separate paths for freight, passenger and superfast trains.

The priority before the Railways continues to be to provide long distance rail transport at reason able cost to the middle and low-income group, for whom there is no alternative means of transport. The recently-introduced Shatabdi Expresses between New Delhi and Bhopal and New Delhi and Kanpur are in effect inter-city services designed to cater to the needs of an emerging new class of business executives

and technocrats.

As I said, a judicious balance is being maintained so that superfast trains do not hinder the movement

of freight and other passenger services. Q: Of late, there have been no major labour troub les in the Indian Railways. How did you achieve increased labour productivity? What kind of cooperation did ation did you get from the labour unions in this field?

MS: A harmonious combination of man, machine and materials is the basic ingredient for any success ful enterprise. The man behind the machine is the most valuable asset. The new focus on human to source management in Railways aims at improved

productivity.

In the first three years of the current Plan, out labour productivity has gone up by 22 per cent Corporate Enterprise Groups and Permanent Negoli ating Machinery at different tiers of management hierarchy ensures labour participation in adequal depth and content in management. The construction approach of labour and officers has led to a harmon ous relationship. Great emphasis is being laid of staff welfare. Fund allocations for staff quarters and amenities have been stepped up to Rs 65 crores 1989-90 compared to Rs 49 crores in 1988-89 planting annual average of the annual average of this allocation in the Seventh

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of Rs 20 crores in the Sixth Plan.

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Staff welfare is utmost in my mind. Because of sustained high productivity achieved by the staff, they were deservingly awarded 44 days' wages as bonus during 1988-89, the highest in the Government sector. If the workers are assured of their welfare and rightful claims, they will give of their best, and this is what the railway family has done. I have directed the Ministry to examine the feasibility of setting up an apex body to assist railway employees in construction of houses on self-financing basis so that they may have a shelter when they retire.

Q. Are you satisfied with the maintenance of engines, coaches, tracks and wagons which have a direct bearing on the punctuality of trains, accidents and movement of freight traffic?

M.S.: There has been a marked improvement in the ineffective percentages (that is, the time for which rolling stocks are down) which have come down steeply in the first three years of the Seventh Plan. In the case of locomotives, the ineffective is down to about 10 per cent compared to the earlier 15 per cent. For coaches it is now about nine per cent from as high as 13 per cent. The percentage for wagons has come down to less than five per cent.

At the beginning of the Seventh Plan, we inherited a backlog of nearly 20,000 kilometres for track renewals. Together with the new arisings for renewals during the Seventh Plan, there would be about 12,000 kilometres for track due for renewal at the end of the current Plan. With this increased pace of renewals all wants would be completely wiped out by the middle of the Eighth Plan.

With the Workshop Modernisation Plan in progress; the maintenance of rolling stock, and periodic overhaul of equipment, etc. has improved considerably, resulting in better utilisation and lesser downtime. More and more mechanised maintenance of track and overhead electrical equipment, is being taken up. Mobile track maintenance equipment are being employed as trunk routes have reached near or even over 100 per cent saturation of traffic capa-

A record low of 0.91 accidents per million train kilometres was achieved in 1988-89 as against 1.50 in 1984-85, effecting an improvement of 39 per cent. Only seven accidents in 1988-89 resulted in fatalities. I have said time and again that we are not complacent and we will not take refuge behind statistics. It is our constant and continuous endeavour to strive towards even safer travel.

What is noteworthy is that the projected increase in traffic is being fully achieved or even exceeded year after the page of year after year despite more than twice the pace of track representation on major track renewal and railway electrification on major routes in the real and railway electrification of major routes in the current Plan, which require track occupation and traffic blocks.

Q: You have been keen to develop the Metropolitan railway transport in our cities. What are your plans in this sphere? Are you thinking of setting up unified Metropolitan Transport Authority (UMTA) combining the sphere of the setting up t (UMTA) combining the municipal authorities, the

works out to Rs 47 crores, compared to the average ment (that is the Mineral Government) and example on the Central Government concerned, the Central Government of the Sixth Plan. Surface Transport and Railways) in the different

> MS: The rapid economic progress and consequent growth of urban centres have led to increasing intraurban and suburban transport. This demand is rising at a staggering pace and can be a crisis factor unless attended to now. The nodal agency for metropolitan transport at the Centre is the Ministry of Urban Development. For tackling this major problem, the Central Government, the State Governments and the city administrations have to evolve a consortium approach before this problem overtakes and overwhelms us. I must commend the approach of the Maharashtra Government in their readiness for cost sharing with the Railways in the Mankhurd-Belapur project.

The Tamil Nadu Government has also recently shown a positive attitude to the consortium arrangement for the Madras Rapid Transit Project. There is also need for exploring possibility of foreign technological and financial packages in this critical area of urban transport. During my recent visit to the USSR I had received a positive response from them to my query for Soviet assistance for Metro systems in India. The Ministry of Urban Development is also examining similar package proposals from some other countries and is expected to take a view shortly.

The Railways will come forward to put in their share of the work, as and when called upon. The Railways would not be able to finance any new intraurban transport system. They would, however, provide the technical expertise for construction and management of such systems.

O: There is criticism in certain circles that you are paying too much attention on providing greater facilities for passengers from well-to-do sections of society while ignoring the necessities of passengers from the lower rungs of society and thus a class bias is palpable in your plans for improvement of passenger service. While the amenities provided in the Shatabdi Express trains to Bhopal and Kanpur from Delhi are excellent and commendable, how would you reply to such criticisms?

MS: I am afraid, I cannot subscribe to this view. The really well-to-do travel by air or by airconditioned first class. Intercity trains like Shatabdi Express are meant to cater to the special needs of a new class of passengers emerging as a result of industrial and economic revolution the country is witnessing. Basically, this class comprises professionals, technocrats, managers and business executives who value time and appreciate such trains which are comfortable, affordable and time-saving. With our society becoming more and more timeconscious, distance has started being measured in "Time Units". "How far" is no longer as important as "how soon". Time has become an important element of cost. Introduction of a few Shatabdi Expresses is a step in recognition of this new value of time for the new class. But let me reiterate that

MAINSTREAM April 15, 1989

distance travel needs of the middle and low income group people who have no other alernative means of travel. The interests of the common man have always been taken into account and almost all new trains provide for a large number of second class sleeper coaches both for BG and MG, with suitable halts and better amenities like cushioned berths.

The Railway Ministry has a deliberate policy of providing adequate rail travel facilities to its bulk users, the middle and lower class of the society for long distance, who have no other alternative means of transport. More and more emphasis is being laid on passenger amenities for them in the trains, at platforms and at the reservation and enquiry counters. There has been a lot of improvement in areas like computerised reservation, casserole meals, intercity trains, speeding up of trains, etc.

Q: The capital structure the Indian Railways have inherited and developed upon is mammoth. It is being stated in certain quarters that the altered capital base is not commensurate with increases in the indices of capital utilisation and hence the capital-output ratio as presented officially is often misleading. How are you thinking of correcting this distortion?

MS: At the end of the Seventh Plan, capital-at-

our primary duty still remains to cater for familiary and the figure our determination of the remains to the still corresponds to what is considered as equity capital in commercial parlance and the Railways are expected to pay a dividend on this to the Central Govern. ment at percentages fixed on the recommendation of the Railway Convention Committee. Railway projects have a long gestation period and are capital. intensive. Under the circumstances, the return of investment of Rs 14,518 crores, on the whole worked out to 5.8 per cent for the year 1988-89.

> It must not be forgotten that the Railways sub. sidise passenger services and certain essential com. modities which are carried much below actual cost This social burden accounted for about Rs 1700 crores in 1988-89. If credit is given to the Railways for these social obligations, the return on investment for the year 1988-89 will work out to as high as 13.8 per cent; similarly, the operating ratio of 93 per cent for the year 1988-89 would also come down to 78.9 per cent.

> In this context, it may not be out of place to state that in 1986, the German, French, Japanese and British Railways got an annual subsidy of about Rs 11,000 crores, Rs 8000 crores, Rs 2500 crores and Rs 2000 crores respectively for the social costs incurred and, to the best of our knowledge, were still in the red. [

With best wishes from:

M's Calcutta Iron & Engg. Co. Ltd.

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Building Assets for the Future

R.K. JAIN

As all of us know, the Railways in this country started in 1853, that is, almost 136 years back. It was a very humble beginning—the railway line running from Bombay VT to Thane. Then it gradually spread over the whole country originating from the various ports. Because the railway system we got from the ruling government at that time, the Britishers, and their main objective was to bring their products to this country for consumer use and take raw materials and produce of this country for converting into products which had higher value.

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They also had another purpose: maintaining law and order in this country and the growth of the railway system looked after that better. Pakistan and Bangladesh formed part of the Indian territory at that point of time and, therefore, the system did not look upon these two countries as separate entities.

At the time of partition, when India became independent, there arose some problems in the sense that in some of the areas, particularly in the North-East region, the rail system was disconnected as it passed through what is now known as Bangladesh, which was at that time East Pakistan.

And it has to be also understood that the railway system was earlier built up of several companies. Each company started exploiting its own territory for the purpose of exports from or imports to the United Kingdom. Then a few state railways were also formed for internal use by the state governments, the princely state governments at that point of time.

At the time of independence we had two major difficulties. One was that there were so many railway systems. We were fortunate enough that the gauges of these systems were not as many as there were different systems. We had one broad gauge system which consists of 5' 6" gauge, we had a metre gauge system which was 3' 3 3/8". This was different from the railway system prevalent in Europe (from where try) which was about 4' 8½" and was known as standard gauge. That is why the term broad gauge a small hill railway system also which has 2' 6" 55 or 56 per cent of our system is in broad gauge, two narrow gauges which serve very small hilly

The author is Chairman of the Railway to a set of questions from Mainstream.

areas, partly for recreational use and partly for penetrating into hill territory.

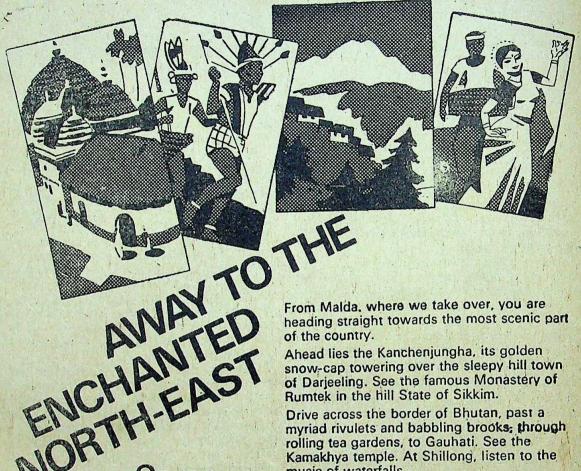
So the problem became one of consolidation which was true also of the political system left behind by the British at the time of independence. We had 52,000 route-kilometres at the time of independence. The consolidation started from 1950-51 and spread over the first decade thereafter. Initially the entire Indian Railways network was consolidated into six zones. Gradually as the railway network grew and some of the problems hitherto not visible came to our notice we had to take a new approach. Today we have nine railway zonal systems in the country. We have also spread out from 52,000 route-kilometres to 61,000 route-kilometres — a growth in terms of track kilometres of the order of 19 per cent after independence.

One more point in consolidation. Our metre gauge system was a split system, there being a north metre gauge system and a south metre gauge system. They were not connected. It was another major step taken in expansion of the network in the metre gauge that the north system was connected with the south system. It thus became possible for metre gauge trains, both goods and passenger, to travel from the north to the south without a traction.

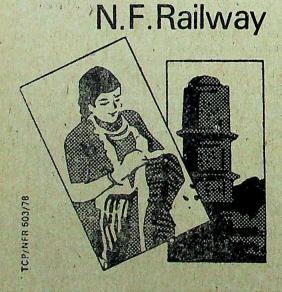
The other major problem was that we were disconnected in certain parts of the North-Eastern region and therefore one of the immediate tasks of independent India was to connect those areas. In Assam, the Assam rail link project was conceived to connect Assam with the rest of the country by a rail system passing near the border through Indian territory. This was very quickly executed under very difficult circumstances posed by heavy rains and the crossing of a river of the size of Brahmaputra. At that time we did not construct a railway bridge, we went without a bridge.

The restoration of that link and consolidation of the Indian Railways were the first two major tasks of the Railways after independence.

The second important task achieved related to indigenisation. We were importing almost everything connected with railway technology before independence. Everything was designed by consultancy firms abroad, we got manufactured everything—wagons, coaches, locomotives—abroad. Two distinct decisions were taken. One was to set up manufacturing institutions or units in our own country. In 1948 almost a year after independence, the first production unit was set up at the Chittaranjan Locomotive Works. This was followed gradually by a coach factory—the Integral Coach Factory—at



JORTH-EAST tour with



heading straight towards the most scenic part of the country.

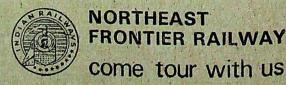
Ahead lies the Kanchenjungha, its golden snow-cap towering over the sleepy hill town of Darjeeling. See the famous Monastery of Rumtek in the hill State of Sikkim.

Drive across the border of Bhutan, past a myriad rivulets and babbling brooks; through rolling tea gardens, to Gauhati. See the Kamakhya temple. At Shillong, listen to the music of waterfalls.

We take you round three wild life spots-JALDAPARA, MANAS, and KAZIRANGAwhere the Indian rhino has found its last home.

Past Assam, we take you as far as Ita Fort and Parasuram Kund in Arunachal Pradesh: Kohima in Nagaland where the famous World War II cemetery stands; Aizawal-the capital of Mizoram; Udaipur-one of the 51 "Pithasthans", Ujjyanta Palace-the marvellous Palace of the former rulers of Tripura, and Unokuti-famous for its magnificent rock murals. Visit Imphal in Manipur where Indian National Army hoisted the tri-colour.

Come back, and say if you had ever imagined India to be so beautiful.



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perambur and the first steam locomotives to be panufactured in this country were produced within

two years in 1950. Then from the mid-fifties we started recognising that steam locomotive was not the right means of locomotion as far as energy consumption and cost of train running were concerned. It was thus decided to switch over to diesel and electric locomotives. So the Diesel Locomotive Works was set up at Varanasi and the Chittaranjan Locomotive Works which was initially producing steam locomotives was redesigned to produce electric locomotives. The first DC electric locomotives were produced in 1961 followed by AC electric locomotives in 1963.

Now here again was a new development. Earlier we had only DC electric locomotive in this country and that too was limited to the Bombay, Calcutta and Madras areas for suburban system. It was considered that electrification would be a great step forward and I think the primary source of inspiration in this sphere came from our late Prime Minisier Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who had that vision. It was then that we started thinking of AC locomotion in the country. The then available best technology abroad was 25 KV AC traction and that was adopted straightaway. It was a very bold decision at that point of time. When we started the Delhi-Howrah route our main problem was: how would we change over from DC to AC? It was indeed a bold decision to convert the whole of the system from DC to AC and it has been proved to be a very wise decision from the point of energy conservation. Thereafter our whole development of railway electrification was in AC.

The other important point to be noted was that we were getting everything designed abroad. A Central Standards Office was the early creation of what is now known as the Research Design and Standards Organisation and, as the name would suggest, it was only standardising the various types of equipment that we were purchasing from abroad to bring them to common standards. From that again in the midfilies the decision was taken to set up our own Research Decision Research Design and Standards Organisation (RDSO) at Lucknow. Our Central Standards Office was at Simla. And the RDSO was set up in the

It initially started with some preliminary type of research. Then it went over to engage in intermediate type of research and most of our civil engibeering technology and production was completely indigenised. lives which Even in the case of the diesel locomolives which we initially imported from abrod the to be able to the RDSO was to know its know-why to be able to improve those designs. But they were but to indigenise the pattern — no new technology but to indigenise their manufacture completely.

Today there are only seven to eight per cent of components are only seven to eight per cent of the components of our diesel locomotives which are imported. And the our diesel locomotives which are inported. And they are such that we would not indigenise the cost of indigenito indigenise them because the cost of indigenilation, of setting up industry for those few combonents would be prohibitive. In fact in some of three firms which produce the world there are only two or

Electric locomotives were designed here itself. Variations of diesel locomotives were also designed here. All types of wagon designs and coach designs which we initially obtained from the French industry were ultimately modified here itself.

Sometimes the contribution of the RDSO in this regard is not fully appreciated. But it has made a major contribution.

In the last few years what we have been concentrating on is how to optimise the system. We are trying to get maximum productivity out of the system. Our track utilisation has almost become two and a half times more than what it was in 1950-51. Our wagon utilisation has also become three to three and a half times of what it was at the time of independence. In fact a major thrust has been in this Plan itself: from a figure of wagon utilisation of 1150 net ton kilometres (NTKMs) per wagon per day and a target of reaching 1350 NTKMs per wagon per day at the end of the Seventh Plan, we are definite of achieving 1475 NTKMs per wagon per day (we may even touch 1500 NTKMs per wagon per day). In both wagon utilisation and track utilisation we have improved the productivity.

We are fortunate in this country that our traffic potential is still very large because it is a developing economy. In the first 40 or 45 years of our independence the growth of traffic has been about three times as far as passenger traffic is concerned and about three and a half to four times as far as goods traffic is concerned. And in the next 11 years the expectation is that we will jump from the present level to a level of traffic which will be twice as much.

This places a very great challenge on our railway system. The system will have to shortly carry twice as much traffic as was achieved in the last 136 years. Therefore, there would be the necessity to expand the system. It is very clear that however much we may improve our productivity, we have to utilise the capacity of our assets — in which case too we are the world leaders today.

The Planning Commission has set up a group under the chairmanship of one of the ex-Chairmen of the Railway Board on the expansion of the railway system. And it has recommended the laying of new broad gauge lines either afresh or by conversion of the metre gauge system at the rate of almost 400 to 500 kilometres per year while our system has expanded at the rate of 200 kilometres per year (907 kilometres of new lines in the Sixth Plan and another 935 kilometres of new lines in the Seventh Plan). So the system would need to expand at a much greater rate.

This group has identified three major routes that would have to be developed for expansion of the system. One is the Delhi-Calcutta route, one is the Delhi-Madras route and one is the Delhi-Bombay route. It has also identified some new coal movement corridors because coal is the major commodity acdree firms which produce those components ublic Domain Gurukhese projections are basically in the requiremnt

of freight traffic. Still more expansion will be necessary for passenger movement. The rate of expansion of new lines in the Eighth and Ninth Plans would be minimally double as has been projected by this group; but I think it would be still more. And even then the total expansion would be about 25 to 30 per cent of our system. The system that we have is of the order of 62,000 route kilometres and if we do it at the rate of 500 kilometres it only means 10,000 route kilometres being added in 10 years. So the expansion is of the order of 15-16 per cent. Whereas my personal feeling is that we must expand at the rate of at least 20-25 per cent in this 10 year period. Because if we have to double the traffic in a short span of time, 75 per cent would be achieved by productive utilisation of the existing assets in those corridors which are not fully used. And 20-25 per cent must be the additional growth.

We are in the process of making our document for the Eighth Plan. Not only have we to complete all the ongoing projects which we have for new lines (2315 kilometres of new lines which have been sanctioned but are yet to be completed) and 1205 kilometres of gauge conversion projects — which means roughly about 3500 kilometres of broad gauge. In addition I would feel that roughly about 3000 kilometres more of new lines (broad gauge in particular) must be constructed in the Eighth Plan. There would be conversion of another 2000-2500 route kilometres of metre gauge and some of the projects are already

under survey.

OUR strategy is not only related to substitution of imports which is certainly an important area; but also directed towards export orientation that was given practically no focus at all in the past.

What are our major assets in terms of bulk items? Rolling stock and track. There are of course signalling and electrical items also but they do not form such a major portion of our assets. Ninety per cent of our assets are really rolling stock and permanent way. In permanent way we do not import anything other than that which is not presently produced in this country. Concrete sleepers we have completely entrusted to private industry. We are not purchasing anything from abroad except for a few steel sleepers. The production of concrete sleepers in this country in the last 10 years has increased from almost negligible to nearly 30 lakhs per annum last year and in four years time we wish to reach the figure of 44 lakhs per annum.

The plant which was producing rails in the main was the Bhilai Steel Plant. Our requirements upto the end of the Sixth Plan were such that its production capacity was able to meet them fully. Our requirements were depressed because we were not getting enough allocation and therefore we were not doing enough tracking. That allowed arrears to grow to the order of roughly 20,000 track kilometres of overdue renewal at the end of the Sixth Plan. And we made a determined effort to wipe out these arrears by the end of the Eighth Plan. So taking into

effort to wipe out the arrears it became necessar that we go for renewal at the rate of 4000 trace kilometres per annum. That required a sudden increase in our demand. Bhilai Steel had an installed capacity of producing five lakh tonnes of rails per annum but it was never tested beyond three lake tonnes because we never placed the orders. And suddenly when we came up with this requirement they could not for the first few years give this level of production. But they have lately tightened up and they are now in a position to produce four lake tonnes of rails per annum. Our requirements at this point of time are of the order of 5.5 to six lake tonnes, but they will be only for the Seventh and Eighth Plans because after the Eighth Plan the arrean of track inversion will be wiped out and then we will again come back to the region of three to 32 lakh tonnes of rails.

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So this importation has to be accepted. But I an happy that there are some private firms which have come forward. One factory has recently been set up at Lonavala and on it we have placed a trial order, for the first time this year, of about 10,000 tonness of rails, and they might be able to supplement and substitute importation to that extent.

We are requiring a better quality of rail than what the Bhilai Steel Plant was originally designed for his the meantime they are gearing up to produce rails of higher weightage — because at the time of independence we were using 90 pound rails, now we are using in our trunk routes 60 kilogram rails (roughly equivalent to 120 pounds). We are also using 9 UTS, a harder variety of rail so that it gives us longer life as against the medium manganese rails which was 72 UTS. The changeover to this occurring too in the Bhilai Steel Plant.

By the end of the Eighth Plan when we would need an annual requirement of only three to it lakh tonnes of rails, the Bhilai Steel Plant and the plant at Lonavla will meet all our requirements. If fact both of these plants are trying, once they read the quality standard, to attain a position where they are able to export if their produce we are not able to use.

Most of the major components in this area we momen more importing. We have recently started importing some new designs of turnouts of switches as the are called. These are required for changeover for one track to another track. We were making a high design of these turnouts of switches and therefore were restricting our speeds when trains negotiate over them to only 15 to 20 kilometres per how over them to only 15 to 20 kilometres per how we want that trains should not be required to down when they overtake each other. Therefore, are importing some new designs — not directly selves but through the industries which are entering to collaborations, so that after the first important designs they would ultimately become self-sufficient.

grow to the order of roughly 20,000 track kilometres of overdue renewal at the end of the Sixth Plan. And we made a determined effort to wipe out these arrears by the end of the Eighth Plan. So taking into account what was to accrue in this period and the company of convenience of the company of the compa

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take up the challenge and gradually meet the

Coaches we are manufacturing ourselves. We have expanded the capacity of the Integral Coach Factory (ICF), Perambur from 750 at the end of the Sixth Plan to 1000 now. We have set up another factory at Kapurthala with a potential production capacity of 1000 which will be reached in another three years time. It has already started production. The first coach was produced on March 31, 1988. This year they have produced 120 coaches, next

year's target is 300.

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Stil they are manufacturing coaches according to the old design. We have placed orders for the import of technology of the new design on a company known as Brel (of UK) in collaboration with Fiat (of Italy) and we will shortly enter into an agreement for the design of a suitable coach with less energy requirement because of a better profile, more corrosion resistance (which is a special requirement in our country), lighter weight (so that the energy consumed is less on that account as well), new materials for internal furnishings and better lay-out. We are importing 44 coaches of this new design after trials, etc. which will take two to three years time — they will have to design coaches according to our gauge, then we will have to test them with prototype and then they will be assembled here. And there will be transfer of technology. And thereafter our Research Design and Standards Organisation (RDSO) should be able to pick it up, that is, further development of future designs.

Our production capacity would be sufficient. Our total requirement on a stable basis is of the order of 2300 coaches per annum. In the railway sector we will be producing 2000 coaches, there is the Bharat Earth Movers Limited (BEML) which produces about 400 coaches, Jessops have a capacity to produce 300 coaches. So this would ensure that in another two to three years time we will have enough capacity. In fact again in this area the importation of technology is being carried out with the idea that

we should get into the export market. On the locomotive side, both diesel and electric (steam is being completely phased out, in fact we had an original target of phasing out stem locomotives by 2013 AD, we brought down the target to phase them out by the year 2000, and we are working to working hard as a measure of energy conservation and reducing cost of operations to phase them out by 1998), we are stepping up our production. As far the electric locomotives are concerned, we have already acquired 18 locomotives of 6000 horsepower as against existing locomotives of 3900 horsepower that we produce. A further step in upgradation of the ation of technology we have taken by getting the recent technology we have taken by getting the recent technology we have taken by got the first time though, which has been tested for the first time only in 1987, of three phase asynchronous technology of the phase asynchronous technology also applicable to 6000 horsepower locomotives. This technology — three phase asynchronous technology — three nous technology — three phase tota-ting parts (logy — is energy efficient with least rotating parts (and therefore least maintenance cost).

Another for the form of the cost is a content of the cost in the cost in the cost is a cost in the Another feature of this is that it is computerised and therefore therefore computerised fault finding is possible (so that the decimputerised fault finding is possible faults that the driver on his own can attend to small faults

and if the faults are beyond his reach he is able to relay to the servicing station about the faults which can be attended in terms of unit replacement basis).

Locomotives based on this technology will be at least five to 10 per cent more energy-efficient, their availability on account of reduced down-time in repairs would increase from 90 per cent (which we have already achieved) to about 95 per cent. With these advantages in view we are going ahead with import of such technology. We are intending to import in the first instance 30 locomotives for freight operations and 10 locomotives for passenger operations. Thereafter there will be transfer of technology. These locomotives would then be manufactured

at the Chittaranjan Locomotive Works.

In the diesel locomotive areas we intend to purchase, in the first instance, 50 diesel locomotives of 4000 horsepower as against 2600 horsepower locomotives which we are manufacturing today. Again the idea is to reduce the time of research to find out those technological improvements which have already taken place abroad in this period. Therefore, this is one time import only to be able to save five to ten years of developmental research. And these will ultimately be manufactured at Diesel Locomotive Works. Varanasi. We may also pass on this technology to Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) which are entering and whom we have encouraged to enter in the production of small type electrical locomotives for us. The idea again is to enable the country to not only produce for its requirements but also to export, if necessary.

We are also expanding the capacity of both these manufacturing units. In the Sixth Plan we had the capacity of manufacturing only 60 locomotives. In the Seventh Plan we have raised this to 100. Chittaranjan produced 100 locomotives in 1988-89 itself. And we have sanctioned a project to increase its production capacity to 120. We hope that by 1991-92 it should be possible for it to reach that 120 locomotive production capability, that is, 120 of the present design and the new design (the new design being one and a half times the horsepower of the present day locomotive) which will be equivalent to 180 present day locomotives (or at least equal to

150-160 locomotives of today).

At the Diesel Locomotive Works we already have a potential of producing 140 locomotives which capacity we seldom utilised in the Sixth Plan but have fully utilised in the Seventh Plan and now we are expanding it to 150. The increase in diesel locomotives we have kept lower for the reason that we

are going more and more for electrification.

So from the point of view of indigenisation in both the electric locomotives and the diesel locomotives only six to eight per cent components are being imported. I don't think that we would seriously attempt to indigenise that six to eight per cent will be prohibitively costly because it indigenise those parts. On the other hand, we are now concentrating, as I mentioned earlier, towards enhancing our export capability. Our objective is that 92 per cent of all that we produce from the indigenous industry should be exported.

There is still some importation in signalling and

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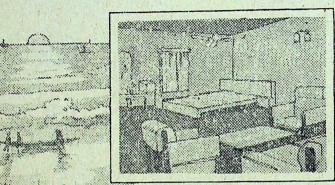
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SOUTH EASTERN RAILWAY

directly in our railway control units except some small requirements in railway workshops (but not in a production unit).

But Indian industry is manufacturing quite a bit of items. In fact in case of later technologies like fibre optics, Indian companies are coming up and setting up their own plants initially in collaboration with foreign companies. This is true in case of solid state interlocking, insulators of new designs conducters of various designs in communication area electronic exchanges, in the field of signalling relays (which our industry is now manufacturing and sometimes even exporting in a limited manner to adjoining countries).

In our export efforts the Indian Railway Coustruction Company Limited (IRCON) and the Rail India Technical and Economic Service (RITES) are playing a major role. Both the organisations are doing a very good job, both in the domestic sphere and outside, and in a large number of countries they have won contracts in open global competition and have made a mark so much so that now a number of similar foreign concerns, both in the field of consultancy and in the sphere of construction, are wanting to join hands with them as joint collaborators for third countries. We have from the side of the Railways, certainly supported both these companies in providing them experienced manpower and experience on Indian railway conditions.

IRCON was given a large number of contracts for railway electrification in India and from that experience they have been able to get an electrification contract in Turkey. We had all along built our own bridges, our own tracks and hence they had a lot of experience available with them. This was also true in case of running railway workshops. Therefore in all these areas they had always been getting contracts but the railway electrification contract was something new.

We are also encouraging now our companies to grow bigger, to take up turn-key projects. So far we had been taking up electrification, track laying projects but now we want to come to a stage where a line, whether electrified, signalled, structured permanently — everything should be taken up by these companies so that these companies grow in size and stature for competition abroad where the projects are given completely on a turn-key basis.

ENERGY conservation has been one area of interest with us for quite long for the simple reason that 90 to 95 to 95 per cent of consumption of energy of the ladian Railways is in traction.

The energy bill as a percentage of working expenses was 23.6 in 1984-85 and in 1988-89 it was 19.9, while in 1989-90 it is going to be, according to the Rajim 1989-90 it is going to be, according to the Railway budget, 19.7. That means roughly four per cent budget, 19.7. four per cent has been the reduction in our energy bill as a cont has been the reduction in our energy. bill as a cost of the total working expenses. And

electrical areas. We are not doing any manufacture year by year we have been reducing our energy consumption by at least five per cent.

> When the Prime Minister tried to emphasise this aspect of energy conservation in the country he had thought that it would be good enough for the various industries to bring it down by five per cent in a two year period. And what we have achieved is something more than 10 per cent in a two year period.

We had planned that 2000 steam locomotives would be condemned in the Seventh Plan. We have already condemned three months ago over 2000 steam locomotives as a result of this exercise. We are restrained in this exercise because we must meet our traffic increase and must produce those electric and diesel locomotives, ourselves. But our desire in this regard is so great that we must condemn them (steam locomotives) as soon as possible. We have targetted such that we would be left with less than 4500 locomotives at the end of the Seventh Plan. We are targetting condemnation of another 2500 locomotives in the Eighth Plan so that by the year 1998 we are through with every steam locomotive.

A further energy conservation of 20 per cent has been kept as a target to be achieved in the Eighth Plan itself. It is a modest target to my mind. We should be able to do much better.

The type of measures we are taking is not only condemnation of steam locomotives. That is one such measure. Other measures are: design of more energy-efficient locomotives, both electric and diesel. better profile of our coaches and locomotives, reduced tare weight of coaches and bogies (which means in the same coaches more traffic would be carried and, therefore, the energy consumption would be literally low), improved training of our drivers (as in the case of a motor car a good driver can save a little energy on that count), better maintenance of our assets (it is a very important issue that is not recognised fully; but when we consume so much energy even two to three per cent reduction is a big reduction in this area).

Besides, there are energy conservation kits which can be fitted to the locomotive equipment to reduce energy consumption. We have already ordered a hundred such kits and we will be fitting them to the locomotives. It is claimed that through this five to seven per cent energy can be saved. A few laboratory tests did give such a result, although field tests have shown three to four per cent conservation.

We have set up a special laboratory at RDSO called Diesel Engine Development Organisation (DEDO) whose basic objective is to improve the energy-efficiency of the locomotive and they have found two or three innovative measures in the design of our valves. piston rings which promise to reduce by another three to four per cent. They have proved to be satisfactory and now the production will start.

We were not carrying out lubrication of rails in a regular manner. We have now taken this up seriously. It is claimed the world over that this causes reduction of energy consumption by five to

seven per cent. Welding of rails is another area. About 4000 kilometres of track we are welding every

year as a part of this drive.

We have set up a special organisation to supervise this at a very high level. At the Zonal Railway level it is the Additional General Manager (Number Two to the General Manager) who coordinates all these activities. At the Divisional level we have the Additional Divisional Railway Manager (Number Two to the Divisional Railway Manager) who is responsible for this activity. And at the Board level we have periodic meetings with these Additional General Managers at which we take stock of the situation, how far they are progressing, etc.

So this thrust from the Railway Board, from my Minister, from the railway level has started bringing substantial results, seen - as I mentioned - in more than 10 per cent of energy conservation in two

years itself.

Our total bill in a year is of the order of Rs 1300 crores and five per cent of that would mean roughly Rs 65 crores. Our assessment in 1987-88 was that we saved about Rs 53 crores through energy conservation. I recently went to Chittaranjan. There itself this spirit has spread so much that although their production was 33 per cent more (intsead of 75 locomotives last year they produced 100 this year), one would have thought that energy consumption would have been proportionately more or at least 25 to 30 per cent more: actually in reality their total energy consumption is less than that of last year. This is the spirit. I complimented the workers there. Because I think the Prime Minister's directive in this direction is: if we can conserve 10 per cent of energy in two years the problem from our entire shortage of energy can be overcome.

There are very interesting figures: in 1985-86 the electricity consumed for traction was 1176 million kilowatt hours, in 1986-87 it was 1288 million kilowatt hours, and in 1987-88 (after the efforts at energy conservation began) the electricity consumed for traction was less, that is, 1256 million kilowatt hours even though we carried four per cent more traffic. This is important. This is the type of effort which is very satisfying.

The renewed emphasis in this area was laid a couple of years ago, I am very happy that it has caught up. Even in the Eighth Plan document of the Railways there is a separate chapter which we have provided to give the emphasis and focus on energy conservation as a vision.

IN conclusion I must say that we have a very major role to play not only because the rail traffic is growing. I think the society is changing and our approach towards the customer is also changing. It has to change much more significantly. We would like to believe in the philosophy that people should travel by rail not because they have to but because they want to.

We happen to be in a monopolistic sitiation in

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and Gangotter travel as well as frieght is another area. long distance passanger travel as well as frieght travel. But we must approach the customer and try to see what his or her needs are and satisfy them. Certainly our resources being limited and restrained we have not been able to do full justice to this area. But within the resource constraints we have shown, particularly in the last few years, that we would try to do as much as possible. And the allocation for passenger amenities has itself grown from an allocation of Rs 3-5 crores per annum in the Sixth Plan to Rs 25 crores this year. Last year's allocation on this count was Rs 19 crores. Thus even in a year we have recorded an appreciable jump. And we have recognised that while this has certainly helped the passengers it has definitely helped us as well.

We will be needing to give an increasingly greater emphasis to customer orientation in the days ahead.

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In every area we have tried to bring about a kind of discipline. We had set a target of 680 routekilometres of electrification by March 31, 1989. The Minister and myself were happy to see that this figure was surpassed to reach 743 route-kilometres.

The target of track renewal was 3750 kilometres and we actually did 3858 kilometres. In Chittaranjan we had planned to produce 99 locomotives and they produced 100, We were intending to produce 40 diesel locomotives, and they produced 41. The day (March 31) I went there to share with them their joy even the General Manager did not know that they had manufactured the 476th bogey which they wanted me to see when their target was 475.

On the staff side there is this feeling that they have to give more. And our own involvement in this entire exercise is very exciting.

In every area we make targets, we monitor and we achieve them. When we don't achieve them we analyse ourselves so that we are able to achieve better in future. Despite the paucity of resources as the Minister said in his budget speech, the Railways got about Rs 500 600 crores less in the Seventh Plan than what had been promised - we achieved better results, the targets were higher. In concrete terms, our overall performance rose by 10 per cent.

I personally feel that rail transport is going to play an important role in the Indian economy. This is now fully recognised by the Government and think it is equally recognised by the industry today. Much better than it was done four years ago.

In creating assets today we are trying to convey the fact that we are building assets for the future. We cannot lose that perspective.

We are fully geared towards meeting the challenge before us. We are cooperating with the German Soyiet, Mexican, Japanese, Algerian Railways, Railways all over the world are looking towards us as an acceptable partner, as a partner whom the know and with whom they are prepared to share their knowledge.

There is a note of confidence in what the Indian Railways can do and should be able to do.

Mobility and Transportation

S.K. RAY

Transportation is important in any country, but in a vast geographical landmass like India or Argentina, it is a sine qua non of economic development. In such a country, where distances and immobility can prove to be major deterrents to economic growth, the rate of such growth hinges inter alia on the national transport network. ... There are many components to growth, like savings, investment, employment and output, but one vital coefficient is transportation. A basic role of transportation for planned economy is that it is not simply incidental or contributory to progress, it is actually an ingredient of progress.

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All by itself, transportation cannot be said to hold the key to progress. It is vital, nevertheless, for influencing other factors relevant to economic development. It brings land to economic exploitation, motivates labour and capital to proliferate, leads industry and agronomy to develop, and trade and commerce to discover new frontiers. ... In the case of a developing economy a skilfully executed programme for development of transportation is actually a strategy for mobility, as the transport economist Wilfred Owen would have us call it.

The Seventh Plan has stated: Transport plays a vital role in the economic development of the country. It must provide efficient and reliable transport services and it must accomplish these objectives at a minimum resource-cost.

The role and significance of transportation in the economy is exceedingly important on many considerations: historical, economic, environmental, social and political. The network has always monitored the trend of development: (1) historically, because transportation has provided the foundation for communications, trade and commerce, and national defence; (2) economically, as the network plays a major role in opening up the hinterland and wideninstrumental in the relative levels of ecological and the trends of urbanisation, population shifts and portation is vital to national defence and social

The author, a top executive in the Indian Railways, is engaged in transport economics. This article has been worked out from an exhaustive chapter on Indian national transportation tion on Indian industrialisation.

Economics and Transportation

Keynes in his General Theory explained the economic phenomenon of development in terms of what he described as independent variables, which are given, and dependent variables, which, in a multipronged manner, are the determinants to growth or anti-growth. While actually restating the theory of employment at the macroscopic level, Keynes said: "To begin with, it may be useful to make clear which elements in the economic system we usually take as given, which are the independent variables of our system, and which are dependent variables."

Among the independent variables, Keynes included the concepts of the propensity to consume, the schedule of the marginal efficiency of capital and the rate of interest, the dependent variables being the volume of employment and the national income (or national dividend) measured in wage-units. The varying but important role of one or more of these variables in the matter of economic development has been duly emphasised in economic literature.

Keynes was fully aware of the extreme complexity of the actual course of events that may lead each one of the variables or the multiplicity of factors that would actually determine them in the economy; but then, he felt that in view of their principal activist role, "nevertheless, these seem to be the factors which it is useful and convenient to isolate".

But what about transportation? In view of the substantial impact of national transportation on the functioning of the variables, or on the ultimate product, growth, should this by itself be considered as a dependent variable, and analysed as such in economic literature?

There is no satisfactory answer to this question. It might be conceded that transport development might have perhaps been put in the overall Keynesian basket of *investment*, not slated for immediate consumption, but which canalises the economic surplus for creation of assets or infrastructure or capital goods, which in turn generate further production and income.

In the post-Keynesian economic literature, transportation has not perhaps been accredited as a dependent economic variable. Neither the money and investment theorists, nor the Chicago or Swedish schools of economists, nor even the exponents of the marginal surplus or economic fundamentalism, came out of their preoccupation with the already enunciated variables to take up the cause of transportation in economic literature.

... There has, however, emerged during the last

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WESTERN RAILWAY

few decades, a genre of economics, called the econo- rail link, extremely mics of transport, led by socio-economic analysts like Wilfred Owen, Merton J. Peck; G.S. Peterson, S.K. Ray and Holland Hunter. In their writings and more recently in the research policy programmes of certain institutions and universities have started focusing attention on transportation clearly operating as a determinant, in the sense a dependent variable does, in the phenomenon of economic growth.

Over-runs

Most of the Third World economies, have, in their programmes for building up economy, taken up development plans for transport networks. These developments in the different sectors of transport have materialised somewhat on individualistic patterns, independent of each other, with consider-

ble areas of over-runs.

In the Indian subcontinent, for instance, such over runs cover nearly 38 per cent as between the highways and the rail roads, 17 per cent as between the railroads and shipping and approximately eight per cent as between airways and railroads, in the movement of freight transport. ... Such over-runs constitute a luxury in aggregate investment that the Third World cannot afford, particularly where there are vast areas crying for minimal transport development. There are vast areas rich in minerals and forest resources in the States of Orissa and Madhya Pradesh in India which have yet to develop even a semblance of rail or highway network.

Internecine competition between warring sectors in developed economies can perhaps to a certain extent lead to optimum productivity and technological revolution but even then all these countries have a history of narrowing down such areas of over-run, in view of the national cost of such unremitted

competition.

In the case of developing economies, on the other hand, areas of overlap in transportation is a diseconomy. Therefore, an investment pattern that would generate and perpetuate, such shadow-regions of overlapping, competing transport arrangements should be considered economically wasteful and would lead to the erosion of profitability (productivity) of each individual transport sector. For each developing economy, therefore, national coordination in transportation arrangements is essential.

Optimal Growth

Coordination in transportation means to fit eachform of transport into its proper place in the transport system. ... Coordination is the assignment of each facility to those transport tasks which it can perform better than other facilities, under conditions which will ensure its fullest development in the

Delightful ambiguity in the matter of internecine transport competition has been the experience in for instance in countries of the Third World. Thus, for instance, in Sri Lanka meaningful expansion of the railroad, in Sri Lanka meaningful expansion of the railroads has made no worthwhile progress, while the stranger. the strength of the motor transport lobby in the corridors of power has apparently grown. In Zaire the construction of a 200 odd kilometres of proposed

rail link, extremely vital to optimum exploitation of natural resources, was checkmated in view of the outside pressures of maritime interests influencing the national transport policies.

It has been the experience of the twentieth century that the spectacular expansion of the economic firmaments was preceded by an overwhelming technology-transformation, nothing short of a revolution, leading to unprecedented bulk movements in freight and passengers never witnessed or anticipated earlier. The widespread and modernised expansion of agriculture, mining, industry and commerce, avalancheincreases in productivity, employment and income, have been both the cause and effect of intra-continental, inter-continental and trans-oceanic resurgence in surface and maritime transportation, airways giving it a close hand. ... In this transportation revolution, new values have surfaced, the hegemony of the railways and the shipping lines has been eroded in many countries, and transportation over the highways and airways has attained dizzy pinnacles.

The importance of this phenomenon, manifest in overwhelmingly increasing volumes of movement, has been adequately appreciated in these countries. This resurgent transport revolution has been manifest in a complete overhaul of transport methods, evolving in its trail many major shifts in public policies pertaining to economic development.

The European situation in regard to the economics of inter-modal transportation, by and large, fits with the general pattern obtained in the United States. There have been phases of cut-throat transport competition between the different modes, roads, rail and inland waterways in the main, both in the European

continent and the United States

Learning their lessons from these phases of unremitted competition, an apportionment programme with a new orientation is now evident in the two continents for devising and applying coordinated remedies based on the aggregate requirement. Remedies now being adopted have, therefore, been based on a clear understanding of the inter-relations between transport and economic development.

Maximum growth will be possible only if transport capacity is available to sustain it; a fully developed system of transport is a prerequisite of economic growth. Transport development programmes, therefore, need to be an integral part of the broad social and economic development plans rather than being

conceived in isolation....

In the evolution of transport economics the historical tendency to view different forms of transport separately is no more tenable. That the greatest challenge in achieving optimum development will be to perfect the means by which policies can be agreed upon.

The economic infrastructure of the national economy, comprising mainly its transport network. ports and harbours, fuel and energy and the technology apparatus, is of immense importance, as it determines the qualitative character of economic development, and the trend and pace of growth.

Infrastructure is capital-intensive, covers more than one economic sector or geographical region,

and can normally be promoted by the Government. Modernisation and Recognition It does not produce economic goods for direct consumption, but are essential for meaningful economic

The Seventh Plan states: The existing transport system comprises several modes of transport amongst which rail and road transport predominates. Other modes of transport like shipping, pipelines and transport are also important within their specialised areas considering the size of the country and its geographical features.

We will briefly discuss each system, and to a

certain extent their inter-relationship.

Railways

The Indian Railways virtually form the lifeline of the country cataring to all its needs for large scale movement of traffic, both freight and passenger. The economic, agricultural and industrial development of the country is inextricably interwoven with the Indian Railways' development and fortunes. The Railways play an important role in determining the

transport costs in production.

With their phenomenal growth from 34 kilometres in 1853 at a gigantic network of 61.976 kilometres the Indian Railways are today Asia's largest and the world's second largest railway system under a single management. The progress that has been achieved since independence is fascinating. In 1950-51 the Indian Railways were moving just 75 million tonnes of revenue earning freight traffic. During 1987-88 a new record was achieved, when the originating loading of revenue earning freight traffic touched 290.21 million tonnes. Similarly, in passenger traffic, passengers (originating) increased to 3792 millions, while the figure was only 1284 millions in 1950-51. The system has also become self-sufficient in manufacture of rolling stock - locomotives, coaches and wagons. The total track kilometres at end-March 1988 stood at 107,438 to which 70,107 was broad

Its vast track network and its huge fleet of rolling stock, together with the number and volume of passenger traffic, and their average lead thus make

the Indian Railways a Leviathan.

The growth has thus been stupendous, both in terms of wherewithal, capacity and performance. The total track kilometres has increased from 77,609 in 1950-51 to 104,480 in 1980-81 to 107,438 in 1987-88; the total electrified track kilometres shooting up from 1253 to 13,710 to 20,312 respectively.... The passenger traffic during the same period has increased around three times in terms of originating passengers and four times in terms of passenger kilometres, and freight traffic three times in terms of originating tonnage and four times in terms of net tonne kilometres (NTKMS).

To make this possible, there has been a substantial increase in rolling stock, both of coaching vehicles and goods wagons. As for locomotives. steam locomotives are being gradually replaced by diesel and electric locomotives. The Railway Reforms Committee (1981-85) recommended that steam should be completely phased out by 1990, and the Railways seem poised to achieve this by 2000 AD.

Vast strides have been made to modernise the system and rationalise its working. Thus the electrified route length has gone up from 388 kilometres to 8157 lakh kilometres in 34 years from 1950-51 to 1987-88. During the same period vast changes in traction have taken place. Many steam locomotives have been replaced; to achieve this, electric locomotives have gone up from 72 to 1436 and diesel from 17 to 3298. Matching progress in signalling, telecommunications, inventory control, production technology and operational pratices has also been brought about. Similarly, for higher speed better track has been laid on the asterial routes.

We are now nearly self-sufficient in rolling stock and other equipment. We manufacture electric locomotives at the Chittaranjan Locomotive Works (CLW), diesel locomotives at the Diesel Locomotive Works (DLW) at Varanasi, and coaches and Electric Multiple Units (EMUs) at the Integral Factory at Perambur near Madras. Wagons are manufactured by the wagon industry consisting of private and some public sector units (15 units; rated capacity 30,000 wagon units) and some railway workshops (three units, rated capacity 2000 wagon units) producing mainly prototypes. More production units, the Wheel and Axel Plant (WAP) at Bangalore and the Diesel Components Works (DCW) at Patiala, have since gone into full production while a second coach factory will also soon

go into full production.

The Research Designs and Standards Organisation (RDSO) at Lucknow has been instrumental in the Indian Railways' efforts towards indigenisation, and for limited exports of rolling stock. companies, called Rail India Economic & Technical Services (RITES) and Indian Railway Construction Company (IRCON) have entered into the area of railway consultancy and construction in India and abroad, while the Project Equipment Corporation under the Ministry of Commerce look after the export of railway equipment and rolling stock. A new company has been floated for introducing operations information system (OIS). A Railway Finance Corporation has also commenced work and floated a bond. The progress of the Railways has been many-sided and substantial.

Outlay

In order to take such big strides, it became neces sary to allocate considerable outlays under the Five Year Plans. In the first few Five Year Plans, the Railways were being considered a core sector of the economic firmament, but towards the later plans, the relative percentage allocations to the Railways have deteriorated vis-a-vis public sector and transport sector in their entirety.

The need for larger outlay for this vital infrastructural sector cannot be overemphasised. Evel in the Eighth Plan transport comes next to energy and in transport, the Railways share the allocations with highways, shipping and airlines. An over whelming importance will need to be given to the Railways in the Eighth Plan.

By the time the Railways entered the Sixth Plan

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ment had built up, affecting productivity. Again the worldwide oil crisis necessitated a major thrust the working the learning of trunk routes. Accordingly, the Railways' Sixth Plan (Rs 6594 crores) was largely oriented to rehabilitation (Rs 2826 crores) and electrification (Rs 441.71 crores), while the Seventh Plan had struck a balance between rehabilitation and development.

Areas of Weakness

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Despite sizeable progress, the Indian Railways today are beset with two major shortcomings.

Arrears of renewal and replacement: The most serious problem is the extensiveness of deferred maintenance. The physical arrears of renewal and replacement as on March 31, 1982 stood at 16,844 kilometres of track, 2700 early steel bridges and distressed girders, 255 locomotives, 2909 coaches and 30,370 wagons (in terms of four wheelers). Besides, of the Railway's total equipment (machinery and plant) 75 per cent in workshops and 50 per cent in production units require replacement. The total burden of renewal and replacement worked to Rs 3000.3 crores. No wonder the Sixth and Seventh Plan gave overwhelming attention to renewal and replacement.

Weak financial and productivity base: Recurrent deficits had plagued the Railways' finances, even though budgets have often been window-dressed to artificially bolster a picture of viability. Arrears of dividends to the general exchequer had built up. The fare and freight structure had not been costbased. While costs had steadily risen due to the rise in prices of inputs like coal and fuel, hikes in the wages bill, the cost of social burdens, and an adverse operating ratio due to drops in discipline and efficiency. Inflation added a continued pressure. The year 1986-87 was a better year, but lately we seem to have reached a plateau in the performance of the Railways.

Strategy, Finance and Future

Remedial strategies have naturally to be multipronged. On one side, the Railways have to further rationalise their fare and, freight structure, and make it largely cost-based. It must enforce large scale economies in consumption of fuel and other inputs and in the wage bill. It has to bring about large improvements in operations by switching over me improvements in operations. ing over mainly to long and medium distance operations. lations; adopt a forward looking traction policy and inventor a forward looking traction policy and inventory management; update technology; resort to aggressive marketing strategies and restore discipline and productivity.

On the other hand, the Planning Commission has to treat the Railways again as a 'core sector' in the Seventh and Eighth Plans, and provide the sector with need because the plans, and provide the sector with need based resources for renewal, replacement should and development. Besides, the Government should adopt a multi-pronged resource mobilisation programme to meet the requirement of resources for the years upto 2000 AD and Rs 18,000 crores for the Seventh Five Year Plan, which has to bear the brunt of repeated. brunt of renewal, replacement and development.

(1985-90) substantial arrears of renewated and replace oundation (Remonth and application of the Railways will be work particularly for medium and long lead traffic, and alongwith the energy sector, lays the foundation for sound economic development

The soundness of the fare and freight structure as also of the financial structure of the Railways has been considerably eroded over the years due to a number of factors: (1) the fare and freight structure has been artificially kept down despite tremendous hikes in the cost of inputs and the aggregate wage bill; (2) deferred maintenance due to poor contribution to the Depreciation Reserve Fund (DRF) has affected the system's productivity; (3) poor performance, an atmosphere of indiscipline and a lack of marketing approach have led to a flight to traffic away from the Railways and to a reduction in revenues.

The Railways should aim at achieving a return of 10 per cent on their capital-at-charge under conditions of a high standard and efficiency. For this, the Railways would have to take cognisance of costescalations and inflationary pressures. Simultaneously, they have to make more serious endeavours towards optimisation of efficiency and productivity for the entire system. Finally, and simultaneously, they have to rationalise the entire fare and freight

As regards passenger fares, these should not be handled in an ad hoc and piecemeal manner, but should have a clear rationale and a close linkage with costs. As regards freight charges, these again should be determined on similar principles of costs and inflation. Subsidies, in case of suburban fares and certain streams of foreign traffic, wherever necessary, should not be borne by the Railways alone. The need for rationalising the finances of the Railways is paramount in the present situation, and comprehensive rationalisation of the fare and freight structure cannot be delayed any longer.

The finances of the Indian Railways have been rendered anaemic because of the relentless use of their assets ever since independence without the infusion of adequate funds required for their maintenance, replacement, development and modernisation. The Railways have been eating into the capital. Their investment needs are large and urgent. Part of the remedy lies in cutting out the fat and removing operational constraints. At the same time, the appropriation to the Depreciation Reserve Fund should be fully provided for, inclusive of arrears and inflation, and should be given priority over dividend and surplus, in the interest of the viability and productivity of the system.

The Railways for their revival will require the utmost cooperation of the Planning Commission and the Government in the Ministry of Finance. They will have to be accorded a very high place in the list of Plan priorities and their requirement of funds fully met, by treating the Railways once again as a core sector not merely in a manner of speaking, but in the shape of actual physical allocations. It is true that the country is faced with acute resource constraints: Nevertheless, in view of rail development being central and integral to national economic

MAINSTREAM April 15, 1989

TO AVOID MISUSE OF ALARM CHAIN HELP THE RAILWAYS

Alarm Chain Pulling without reason has become a nuisance, which is the main cause for loss of punctuality of trains. This causes inconvenience to all the passengers. Passengers are requested to help the Railways in prosecuting those who are indulging in this social evil. The person who helps in arresting and prosecuting such miscreants is awarded Rs. 250/- as an incentive by the Railway Administration.

CENTRAL RAILWAY

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development, ways and means will have to be sources to trol on road transport to raise sufficient resources to trol on road transport. by the Government to raise sufficient resources to finance the developmental activities of the Railways. What is required is a balanced Plan backed by the political will to implement it.

Rail-Road Coordination

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In transport evolution, the historical fendency to view different modes separately, and without relation to one another, is no longer tenable in today's context. That the greatest challenge in achieving optimum development will be perfect the means by which policies can be agreed upon for transport as a whole, Wilfred Owen added, without succumbing to the dangers of favouring one form over another, or of supporting the status quo at the expense of innovation has to be increasingly appreciated.

The Indian scene is more or less representative of the Third World scenario. Here inter-model transport developments have through the decades been considered in merry isolation, and not in pursuit

of any overall national ecordination policy.

Going through the entire range of literature on transport competition in India, from the archaic report of Mitchell and Kirkness in 1932-33, to the more recent report of the Committee on Transport Policy and Coordination (CTPC), one is inclined to believe that the approach consistently has been one of ad hoc sharing of the field between the railways and roadways, with certain hesitant attempts at peripheral coordination. Shipping and airways in India, therefore, still function as non-competitive groups.

Matters came to a head when the Masani Committee voiced the need for building a very intricate network for vehicular traffic; even this involved close competition with the Railways. The Committee on Transport Policy and Coordination (CTPC was appointed in 1959 to probe the controversy scientifically and formulate a policy and logistic for coordination. Their final report came in 1966.

Three factors are vital for a correct appraisal of the Indian situation: first, the huge investment and capital sunk in the railways from the public exchequer; second, spare capacity on the Railways vis-a-vis high tated traffic drifting to road; and finally, rapidly developing competition from the road complicating

Issues Fundamental

In an attempt at coordination between road and fail transport, the first important need is to have the correct and justifiable economic bifurcation of traffic being a property are traffic between rail and road. Here, interests are bound to come into conflict. Because of the spare capacity and huge national investment in railways, unbridled unbridled competition is highly wasteful. Road transport of the railtransport should thrive as feeder services to the railtoads and open up the hinterland for many railheads spread over the country, allowing for some unavoidable parallel able parallel road services. To promote aggregate transportation for optimum national economic development, a properly coordinated transportation network is necessary to the Work is necessary. This requires a review of the chire transport entire transport promotion policy. In such a reassess-ment, India will promotion policy. In such a reassessment, India will have a measure of stabilisation and

trol on road transport. The division of rates should be based on total and not merely out of pocket working expenses, the additional cost of any diversion of traffic being borne by the traffic as a whole.

The peculiarity of the Indian situation is marked by a duality of control between railroad and highway transport, which has over the years created a situation of inherent divergence of interests. The Wedgwood Committee (1937) found road transport unbridled and proliferating in chaotic and open competition with the railroad. "Effective coordination can only be brought about by operating both road rail transport as public services," the Committee felt. Under the Five Year Plans, expansion of the Indian Railways has been substantial. Considered from the viewpoints of the necessities of developing industry and agronomy, India's dependence on road network will continue to be stupendous. It is necessary to have an extensive network of arterial and feeder roads to open up the hinterland. The Railways will have to span the trunk routes and link the mining and industrial belts as a priority. Road motor transport will have to take care of the rest, mainly the hinterland, for the railways.

The initial cost of road construction is borne by the general taxpayer. For relatively lighter traffic and for short distances roads are suitable as they can be constructed almost anywhere at a considerably lower cost than a railway line. This factor all over the sprawling expanse of the Third World has much to do with the relative cheapness of motor transport in short lighter-traffic trips. The railways provide their own permanent ways, while motor transport uses roads provided by civil authorities.

In India, the case of appointment actually went by default. Thus serious trouble arose when motor transport-violated regulations, and started to compete with the railways for high rated and long distance traffic...Road transport in India has been aided by statutory and procedural liberalisations. -In 1954 the Regional Transport Authority was empowered to issue licences freely for motor vehicles to ply within a radius of 150 miles. The climax came in 1957 when the Transport Commissioners' Conference recommended that there should be cent per cent increase in the number of freight carrying vehicles and lorries and, finally, that the Code of Principles and Practices for inter-modal regulations should be suspended for five years. The consequent arrangement has been criticised as a virtual scrapping of the Code.

This has understandably put the Railways in an embarassing situation. While road transport is at liberty to wage open' competition, the Railways are bound by the statutory public service obligations under the Indian Railways Act. This eventually may mean an overall increase in the general level of rates on this account alone by the Indian Railways. Apart from affecting the pace of industrialisation, this may also result in further diversion of traffic, giving rise to a vicious circle, altogether inimical to aggregate economic growth.

In India, a bold railroad transport coordination policy should start with some scientific restrictions on motor transport:

in road services to inhibit expansion of road transport, important for general economic development and for strategic necessities, but to avoid investment in roads parallel to the railways. It needs to be appreciated that the railway network is a sunk investment of the Government. Development of alternative transport modes needs to be consistent with the continued profitability of the Railways. Secondly, the whole policy of licensing motor vehicles needs to be reviewed. Licensing should be on the basis of economic division of traffic, and the issue of licences of motor vehicles for long distance through traffic, where the railways are obviously more economic, should be regulated. Thirdly, there should be a really well organised machinery, like the French Comite de Coordination, to function as a watchdog of coordination. Finally, there should be integration of rail-road transport services on many routes, with increased participation in terminal road transport by the railways on a large number of routes, in collabor-

Perspective

ation with road transport,

The National Transport Policy Committee (NTPC) have lately considered the issue of the apportionment of national transportation in India, and have more or less reemphasised the need for leaving long distance and bulk traffic to the railroads, light and short-lead to roadways and medium lead, between the two, on a scientific distribution arranged on the economic principle of 'what the traffic will bear'.

The major recommendations of the National Transport Policy Committee (1980) are briefly indicated: (1) for determining an optimal inter-modal mix, the national policy should aim to create a transport system which provides service at the least resource cost to society; (2) energy-conservation should be given the over-riding consideration in determining inter modal mix, with the energy-efficient modes being given a bigger role to play; (3) movement of commodities is generally more economical by road for a shorter distance upto 300-350 kilometres beyond this range cost advantage certainly lies with the Railways; (4) the Government should try to change the inter model mix in the desired direction, through investment and pricing mechanisms rather than through regulation and physical control.

The tenets of coordination, however, cannot help the railways for the entire sweep. Very soon the economics of competition will come into play. While emphasis is increasingly being laid on mutual coordination between rail and road transport, it has to be simultaneously appreciated that for a specific section or for a specific traffic the customer will eventually take to the mode of transport that suits him best. The emphasis on quality and performance can no more be ignored either by the railways or the

roadways.

National Transport: Seventh Plan Outlook

Notwithstanding the continued expansion that has taken place, the capacity of the entire transportation system including the road network continues to fall short of demand for transportation. Capacity con-

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennal and Canggett in several areas. These constraints in the Railways have led to movement of bulk commodities like coal, over long distance by road at high cost to the economy. The road system too is under heavy strain. Inadequacy of capacity and substandard infrastructure have led to excessive transit delays, fuel wastage and higher operating costs. Seaborne traffic also has faced constraints, as port infrastructure modernisation has lagged behind changes in shipping technology and cargo handling methods. Several ports suffer from draft limitations as well. These are some of the areas where position would be rectified to the extent feasible in the Seventh Five Year Plan.

Requittal of identical responsibilities will have to be undertaken in transportation development during the Eighth Five Year Plan. Together with energy development, scientific, modernised and coordinated growth of the national mobility and transportation network will largely determine the success of the Indian Industrial Revolution in the development

decades ahead.

An Appeal

The Book Review has been run, since its inception in 1976, through voluntary effort. With the journal now having secured for itself a niche in the book world, it has now been decided to set up a trust to manage The Book Review.

To enable us to collect a sizeable corpus of funds, we envisage the following scheme: Onetime donations of a minimum of Rs. 500 from individuals and Rs. 5000 and more from cultural and philanthropic organisations. The actual collection of funds will be done only after the Trust is registered.

We hope that friends and well-wishers will send in their pledge today in return for Life Membership of The Book Review.

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Indian Railways and National Economy

JAGJIT SINGH

Railway transport in a subcontinental country like India is to its national economy what the blood stream is to the living body. It is, therefore, worthwhile dwelling on its growth and planning since independence before proceeding to plan its growth for the future tasks the Indian Railways have to perform with the advent of the next century.

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At the time of independence, the system of Indian Railways was a multigauge network of 59,315 route kilometres. It is still a multigauge system with the following split between its three different gauges in 1951 and 1988:

Route Length of Indian Railways

	Broad Gauge 1988	Metre Gauge 1988	Narrow Gauge 1988	Total 1988	
Route Kms.	33,831 (25,385)	23,898 (24,185)	4,247 (4,153)	61,976 (53,596)	

Percentage increase 15.6 (Figures in brackets pertain to the year 1951)

The broad gauge (BG) network carries the bulk of its originating traffic. Although the BG route kilometerage is only 55 per cent of the total, the originating passenger and freight traffic are respectively 70 and 80 per cent of the total on all its three gauges. In spite of this imbalance between the route kilometres of the diverse gauges and the traffic they carry, the traffic carried on BG has grown immensely since independence as is shown by the upsurge of two basic indices of service performance: (i) number of originating passengers and passenger kilometres and (ii) originating tonnage of freight and tonne-kilometres of freight carried.

TABLE 1 Growth of Traffic on Indian Railways

S. Carlina Ranways			与自然处理的
No. Particulars 1. Passenger originating (Suburban and and account of the control of the contro	1950-51	1987-88	Multiplier
	Millions	Millions	Factor
2 bulling and non-	1,284	3,792	2.95
3. Tonnes originating (Total) 4. Tonne-kilometres (Total)	66,517	269,389	4.05
	93.0	318.5	3.45
	44,117	231,241	5.24

The author, a retired General Manager of Indian Railways, is known for propagating of the Kalinga Science Prize. Currently his talent is being used by the Planning Commission on the Railways.

Although both the passenger and the freight originating traffic have increased over three-fold in 1987-88 compared with 1950-51, this increase has not been uniform during the past 37 years. This period of 37 years from 1950-51 to 1987-88 may be divided into three subperiods - two equally spaced ones from 1950 to 1965 and the other from 1965 to 1980, and the third one from 1980 to 1988. Since the freight traffic is both the bread-winner of the Railways as well as the sustenance of the national economy, it will suffice to consider the total originating tonnage lifted by the Railways during three subperiods. The total originating tonnage steadily increased every year from 93 million tonnes in 1950-51 to 203 million tonnes in 1965 at the average. rate of 7.3 million tonnes per annum. In the next 15 years the tonnage lifted "hovered around the level reached in 1965-66", to borrow an euphemism used in an official publication of the Railway Board to extenuate the regression in their freight operation. Because of this "hovering" the freight operation of the Indian Railways reached its peak during the Third Plan period. For in the 15 year period 1965-1980 following the Third Plan the average increase dropped barely to one million tonne per annum against seven million tonnes per annum during the previous 15 years.

There were many reasons for this prolonged regression of the Indian Railways' freight performance that began in 1965-66 and continued with a solitary up and down till 1980. It will suffice here to mention only the most important of them. It is the fact that the year 1965 was a fateful year in our economic history. It was the year of Indo-Pak armed conflict that began in September, 1965. Although the fighting lasted only three weeks, it had very grave economic consequences. It affected the whole economy of the country especially as it was followed by two successive droughts caused by a widespread failure of monsoons in the summer months of 1966 and 1967. It even led to the suspension of planning, euphemistically called "plan holiday".

However, even after the "plan holiday" was over, the Railways took very long to recover. The recovery did not occur till 1980-81, that is, 15 years after it suffered its first real setback in 1965-66. However, the Railways began to recover from this prolonged setback from 1980-81 when the traffic lifted rose from 220 million tonnes in 1980-81 to 264.8 million tonnes in 1984-85 during the Sixth Plan period. The annual rate of increase during the Sixth Plan was thus around nine million tonnes as against only one million tonnes during the previous 15 years.

MAINSTREAM April 15, 1989

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During the three years of the Seventh Plan there performance and Gordon decade

has been a further quantum jump in the Railways' performance from 264.8 million tonnes in 1984-85 to 318.5 million tonnes in 1987-88. The average annual rate of increase has now risen to 18 million tonnes per annum, nearly double the rate during the Sixth Plan period. The increase in the Railways freight lift during the five years of the Seventh Plan is thus expected to equal that secured in 25 years after 1950-51.

If the Railways are to meet the needs of our growing economy during next decade, they must double their existing lift of freight tonnage by the turn of the century. This means that the average rate of climb has to be 20 million tonnes per annum. If the performance of the Railways, in the past three years of the Seventh Plan is any indication, it is likely that they will reach the 20 million tonne increase in the last year of the Seventh Plan. But it is imperative that they maintain this commendable for the whole of 1990s decade.

It is a task that cannot be accomplished unless the Railways upgrade their production technology in their manufacturing units and modernize maintenance practices to ensure much higher reliability of their locos, wagons, OHE, track and signalling than at present. That is, they have to reduce the present rate of failures of their equipment like engines, coaches, wagons, track, signals etc. to quasi-zero. Unless the Railways improve their technology to run trains, both passenger and freight, from origin to destination without any failure en route, there is no way to meet the challenge confronting them. For these failures lead to an erosion of line capacity. Most of the failures occur en route because the quality standards laid down for production and maintenance are not observed rigorously, They will have to ensure their de rigueur observance.

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Golob: Cooperation in Europe

(Contd. from page 10)

large and small, states. Those states that are in possession of mounting piles of weapons are expected to carry a greater burden of responsibility to lower the level of the threat to all. They do shoulder a political responsibility towards others on how they are lowering this threat and to take into account the opinion of others, particularly when the security interests of others are involved,

It is important to see that there is hardly a single angle of disarmament in Europe that does not possess an all-European dimension. This is the background for the adamant stand Yugoslavia has taken in favour of a close and substantive link between the negotiations on conventional armaments of 23 European countries belonging to military blocs and

the CSCE process and its participants.

The CSCE, in its own right, provides an important impetus to the democratisation of international relations. Relaxation of tensions, lowering of levels, of military confrontation and diminishing of the fear of outside threat unavoidably loosens the bloc constraints imposed by the bloc authority. Democratic potentials in all societies are freed as a consequence.

The CSCE is not a vehicle for the export of

democracy of one's own model and taste.

The idea behind the CSCE is to build not only trust among states, but the trust between the citizens and their state, as well. The CSCE regards the individual as á free human being and not a subject and require from the states which are signatories to the Final Act, to treat the individual in such a

The CSCE is surely able to provide for an international environment in which the democratic processes will face less impediments. Democracy is a virtue that is inherent in the minds of peoples and it surely is not something that should be discovered for them by somebody else in a patronising

Prejudices are rarely mentioned and that the

CSCE is a good tool to combat them should be more widely understood and accepted. Prejudices are not a rare occurrence in all parts of the continent. There are prejudices on the basis of wealth, perceived industriousness of some, poverty of others, towards national minorities, migrant workers, the so-called small cultures, to name a few. The CSCE has a clean slate in this. Its documents, if they would only be honoured and implemented, call for an enlightened attitude towards all peoples and all individuals and demand that all have an unimpeded possibility to develop freely.

Pluralism in Europe is strongly underpinned by ithe CSCE and its role as a democratic process devised for cooperation. For a long time pluralism was not really strong on the European scene. One power was looking forward for its chance in the revolutionary development in capitalist society and the other was obsessed with the "roll-back of com-munism". These ambitions pertaining to the panoply of the cold war have receded but it may be too early to say they are gone for good. Anyway, pluralism should by accepted as a distinct advantage of Europe and not as a fact of short duration in a vain hope to be replaced by the uniformity of social

and political order, as soon as possible.

The European and North American responsi bility for the contribution to the security and dever lopment in the world is clearly present in the Yugoslav vision of the CSCE. The CSCE provisions visions are committing the participating states to give their due in order that relaxation of tensions would be a state of the state of would become a global phenomenon; that the use the CSCE standards in relations with the tries beyond the confines of Europe and North America; that they proceed from the awareness that economically Europe is not island into itself and that the Mediterranean and its security and state cooperation are immediately linked to those of the CSCE properly.

This brief and incomplete review indicates the interest of Yugoslavia in the CSCE is immediate comprehensive, its role is honest and respected it stems from non-cli

it stems from non-alignment.

Railway Management: Strength and Weaknesses

P.N.S. BEDI

It would be worthwhile to look at the quality of management of the Indian Railways, the biggest civil organisation (with a 1.6 million workforce under a single management) in the world barring the Soviet Railways and the Chinese Railways which comprise two million and 1.9 million employees

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The Indian Railways have been losing their preponderant position in the activities of the Government of India with the coming up of public sector organisations in other economic spheres. In the year 1950-51 the total working expenses of the Indian Railways were Rs 216 crores against the Central Government's total revenue expenditure of Rs 347 crores. In 1987-88 the Railway's revenue expenditure was Rs 7956 crores, while the Central Government's expenditure was Rs 73,560 crores, including public sector; the share of the Railways in the state controlled economic activity declined in four decades from 62 to 12 per cent.

Nevertheless, the Railway are still the most dominant single public venture and the only wing of the Government with a separate budget, administered by own codes and under the control of a Ministry manned by their own departmental officers. In addition, the Railways indirectly play an important role in the working of most industrial units and are a paramount factor in the growth of national economy. The Railways have the largest body of officers (13,200) out of which 7,000 come from 10 disciplines, technical and non technical, and are recruited by the Union Public Service Commission

For the purpose of this examination of the management of the Railways, one could take leave of the reports of the numerous administrative reforms commissions, as it is the general view that their reports served no useful purpose. In any case these Commissions was a control of the served no served no useful purpose. sions were set up to provide 'places' to politicians out of power and retired 'loyal' bureaucrats, whose unemployment evokes the greatest sympathy from the nowers at evokes the greatest sympathy from the powers that be. One could also take leave of mounting cynicism that not much hope can be entertained entertained about improvement in the politicaladministrative environment. In course of time, the present state of affairs must change and yield to the

requirements of the country and society. Also many in the superior service would prefer to perform their duties free from most of the ills generally associated with managements, even though they do not determine the ruling culture in these services.

Under British Rule

The Indian Railways during the period of British rule were not only the principal instrument for the achievement of the objectives of British imperialism - India as a market and supplier of raw materials for the British industries and cheap labour for British capital invested in India - but were also the principal means of enforcing British power in any part of the vast country by providing quick movement for

the army personnel.

According to the 1931 census, the total public force (army and police) personnel of European origin in India was less than 60,000 and needed high mobility. It can be easily seen from a map that the density of railway lines left by the British had little relationship to the economic requirement, of different areas. As the symbol of foreign rule, the Railways, which extended throughout the country and were vulnerable, were the first target of revolt in the British days. It is a target of attack even now, occasionally during mass agitations. The aim before independence was not to get the maximum traffic output from the capital invested in the Railways but a smooth running system for quick transportation backed up by the civil administration.

During the period of food shortages, culminating in the Bengal Famine in the forties, the Railways had their own department for providing rations to their staff. All the officers and supervisory staff and the bulk of junior staff were provided houses; of course the staff strength before independence was a little over half the present number. For running the Railways, very clear, precise and detailed procedures for capital and revenue expenditure and store

accountal, had been laid down.

This is an advantage which the Railways continue to enjoy over public sector units, which, on the pleas of autonomy and commercial considerations, have loose financial control, apart from the disadvantage of the public sector units that their policy questions are decided by officers of the Ministry who are not technocrats. The extent of losses. attributable to inefficient financial management in relation to the total expenditure, has been much less on the Railways than in the public sector units. revealed by various reports. [Unlike the European Railways, the Indian Railways, managed

The author joined the Railways at Lahore 1944 and, after serving on different Zonal Railways in the norththe northern and eastern parts of the country, retired as D. and eastern parts of the country, retired as Director, Railway Board in 1980. He also served for fifteen years in the Railway

MAINSTREAM April 15, 1989

on the pattern of the British Railway, have a separate department (Traffic department) to coordinate the work of the different technical departments and be responsible for the total traffic output.]

Inheritance

When the British left, the Indian Railways were the most extensive and developed railway system of what is now the Third World. It had a route kilometrage of 53.5 thousands (including thousands of double lines). China, with an area two and half times that of India's, had before the 1949 Revolution, only 22 thousand rail route kilometres (reduced by 1949 to 10 thousand kilometres on account of the depredations of the Japanese invasion and the civil war) and in 1986, had 52 6 thousand kilometres, (including six thousands of double lines). India in 1986 had 62 thousand route kilometres (including 14 thousands of double lines). Even the Soviet Union, over five times the size of India has only two and a half times of India's rail kilometres. The USA has a higher density of rail network: the USA is more than twice the size of India and has under different managements four times the rail route kilometres of India. In comparison with India's rail freight traffic output (tonnekilometres) the traffic outputs of China, the Soviet Union and the USA are nearly four times, twenty times and seven times respectively.

An American expert recorded in 1968: "For the last quarter of a century, the Indian Railways have carried heavy burdens with distinction. This longestablished system, with old equipment but firstrate leadership, made a major contribution in the years 1939-45. During India's planned growth since 1950 the Railways have played a central role in the economy's progress. Through both increased efficiency and added capital, the railway system has more than doubled its freight traffic output during the

first three plan periods."

Seventies: Labour Agitations

After independence the industrial and agricultural development generated by the first three Plans imposed on the Indian Railways management and staff completely new tasks and the response was adequate because of the devotion and zeal displayed at all levels in the pride of the achievement of independence. The railway staff had not yet been hit by the galloping inflation (that they encountered since the seventies) and the management personnel were not suffering from the erosion of their economic strength and social status (because of disparities arising from the much better career prospects and pay scales of other services).

For railwaymen the position had been constantly deteriorating and by the seventies, except for the staff in the lowest grades, who accounted for over half the total strength of the railway personnel, the real wage of all senior staff and officers had declined appreciably. Neither the political leadership nor the top management were prepared to accept the simplest of truisms that the state power, exercised through the police and the weapon of non-recognition of those unions which were more militant

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGangotri Pailway have a cannot ensure labour productivity. The rail freight performance, which is crucial to the Indian economy (and the principal preoccupation of the whole rails way system), was not responding to capital inputs year after year and the management failed to understand the basic causes of the unsatisfactory performance of the Railways from the late sixties onwards

Eighties: Industrial Pace

After a spell of virtual stagnation in the level of the freight traffic carried, lasting over a decade the rail operations started picking up in the eighties, consequent upon the complete elimination of strikes and dislocation of traffic in isolated areas. caused by staff agitations which had been witnessed in the seventies. Quite a few railway employees lost their jobs for participating in these strikes and agitations and the unrecognised unions became unable to muster support of the staff for any direct action. There was also significant improvement in the emoluments of staff through various packages of upgradations of their scales of pay in the years 1981-85 benefitting almost the entire railway staff. But it cannot at the same time be forgotten 'that the national economy had suffered heavy damage for over 10 years.

The machinery for solving grievances relating to matters other the pay-scales, however, remains as tardy as before denying the Railways the efficiency and productivity which can come from prompt redressal of genuine staff grievances. There is hardly any comprehension in any section of the management of the achievements possible from capital assets with a work-force and enthusiastic managerial cadres. The performance of the Railways depends upon the managerial efficiency at different levels and the productivity of its 1.6 million employees. In advanced countries the role of the organised unions is accepted and there is an understanding by the society of the relationship between human welfare and industrial growth. Even seniormost officers there usually come up from the lowest grades because of the universality of education. In India the officers, generally status-conscious because of the prevailing feudalist social values, prefer to send instructions from their offices and the technological leadership and the provision of suitable working conditions are left to the junior supervisors at the work-spots.

External Influences

The senior officers of the Indian Railways have the same mental make up as the civil officers holding desk jobs because they are recruited along with them and interact with them frequently in the course of their official work. While in other departments the performance of an officer is basically individual, the Railways, the officers have to function collectively at all leaves tively; at all levels railway work demands absolute coordination daily and in fact hourly.

The railway bureaucracy has been quite sore about the restricted avenues of promotion in comparison with other services. There are at least two reason for this. The railway officers are the only category civil officers, who have to function as managers and to provide technical to provide technical guidance and leadership

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large work-force. An increase in their emoluments, unaccompanied by similar increases in those of millions of junior staff, can create discontent. Secondly, with many times the number of officers of any other department, the number of highest grade posts on the railways are far fewer. There has been prolonged representations by the Railway Officers' Federation for improvement in their prospects vis-a-vis the officers of other departments.

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Some upgradation of railway posts was sanctioned by the Cabinet in the mid-seventies, which created certain administrative problems, as officers were controlled by officers of the same rank, though senior, in all railway departments. A few more posts were upgraded in the early eighties which created some diffusion of authority as a side-effect. The problems of administrative control were rectified in 1988 when the Cabinet allowed conversion of some of the upgraded posts into posts of still higher grades.

But all these representations and responses have been like chasing a mirage, as other services have, in the meantime, been expanding and improving their prospects. This is evident from the fact that candidates for the Central Services Examinations are offering the Railway Traffic Service as their last preference, though the engineering services on the Railways still enjoy a preferential position in the choices of the candidates. Because of low productivity of labour and assets, the junior railway officers have to toil very hard to secure marginal improvements; even officers in the administrative grades up to the highest level have to perform executive duties, sometimes round the clock, because of the nature of the railway work and the ever-increasing demands of the national economy on it. But the Railway Officers Federation has never asked for parity in career prospects with other services but only reduction in the glaring disparities.

However, it is a matter or some regret that all these representative bodies of seniormost officers of the Railways, and of all other services, have concentrated on parochial issues, never venturing into the issue of improvement in the functioning of their departments by dealing with problems like office efficiency, sloth, corruption and responsiveness to the public and staff requirements.

Though the deficiencies of the Railways are less than those of other Government departments, they are much more noticed, because of the vastness of the activities of the Railways. The lapses in the working of the Railways, especially in punctual running of passenger trains and service to customers, are experienced daily by a few million users. An easy way found by the political leadership, to create an alibi for itself. alibi for itself, is to blame and change the top railway management frequently. The Government gives an impression impression of earnestness to improve matters by blaming and blaming and changing the top railway management, namely the Chairman and the member responsible

This has happened nine times, twice in the fifties because the members of the Railway Board relying on their experiences of the Railway Board relying on their experience and technical knowledge felt too confident and a little overbearing in their dealings with the Rail a little overbearing in their dealings with the Railway Ministers, and seven times since

1970 after the Railways were beset with labour problems. One such conflict between the Minister and the Chairman of the Railway Board had all the trappings of a drama and made international news. The abolition of the Railway Board has been demanded very often in the Parliament with the fervour the republicans used to display for the abolition of monarchy.

Exploiting the dissatisfaction of the public with the railway infrastructure, which in the past did not get sufficient importance from and was neglected by the management in its preoccupation with moving more and more freight traffic, the members of the administrative services have been making periodical attempts, to the consternation of the railway bureaucracy, to capture the only citadel of technocrats the Railway Board - till they were put off by the complex technological and labour problems to be faced in the Railway Ministry. The top posts in the Railway Board require field experience and technical competence even for policy-making and coordination; also the incumbents have very often to perform executive functions. The Railway Ministers have made use of the fact that the members of the Board have been on the defensive because of the working conditions in the Railways, and the fact that all the members of the Board are of the same rank (Secretary), to secure unquestioned supremacy in the total working of the Railways, not available to Ministers holding other portfolios.

Most Railway Ministers, in the past, have been giving very little thought to the basic problems of the Railways, that is correct priorities in capital investment and labour productivity. Award of contracts, diversion of funds to some favoured area and appointments have, over the years become the main concern. It is gratifying, that the things have

changed in the recent past.

Other Departments

In departments other than the Railways, serious deficiencies go unnoticed; their accountability lacks clarity and a time-frame. The members of the administrative and police services, barring exceptions, learn to make compromises with the political figures very early at the district level. Some of the senior members of these two services (and also of the railway services), in pursuit of their ambitions have aided the politicians in taking the high road of corruption; although with the help of established procedures and rules, they could have considerably checkmated corruption, without having to make any big sacrifices. The cause of a clean administration has seldom figured in the pronouncements of their federations.

The innumerable failures over the years of these services have contributed in no small measure, to many of our ills, such as the present state of law and order and the underdevelopment of villages. Massive sums of revenues remain uncollected, which rightly belong to the exchequer and, therefore, to the people (hopefully). But the political potentates are indulgent towards their principal partners, namely the administrative and police services, whose assistance is often needed in the attainment and exercise of Power.

Because of the widening gap between hopes and aspirations generated by the freedom movement on one hand, and the realities after independence on the other, the attainment of political power through democratic means necessitates increasing management of the democratic processess by the police and civil bureaucracy. The failures of other departments, mostly headed by members of administrative services, are less apparent from month to month or year to year. These do not result in similar actions by the Government as with the Railways, as political leadership so far has been partial towards the administrative services vis-a-vis the technocrats.

Unequal Levels of Efficiency

A distinguishing feature in the economic development in India vis-a-vis other countries, has been its uneven character in respect of different regions, different sections of people and different wings of Gov-This fact is accepted in frequent official admissions that development has not uniformly percolated to all the people. This has created an adverse environment for the working of the Railways, technologically the most developed sector, incidentally far more than even the Defence and Communication departments as is evident from the much lesser indigenisation of their equipment requirements for Defence and Communications.

The dichotomy in the levels of development and efficiency affects the Railways adversely. The efficient civil back-up during the British period, is no longer available. The thefts of railway equipment have been continuously rising and, as stated in the budget paper amounted to Rs 2.5 crores in the year 1987-88; the resultant financial loss to the Railways in the shape of occasional detentions to trains, because of the sudden disappearance of signalling and overhead electric traction equipment, is very many times the value of goods stolen. Also the financial loss from detentions to trains, subjected to chain-pulling by miscreants and detentions to other trains as a consequence, if computed, would run into scores of crores of rupees. These problems have been the subject of correspondence between the Railway Ministers and the Chief Ministers for decades but the problem remains where it was because of helplessness or preoccupation with bigger law and order problems of the civil authorities.

Image

In the Press and the Parliament every opportunity is taken to launch an attack on any public sector organisation and the Indian Railways - the principal industrial undertaking of the country - to prove that only the pursuit of profits can make for the efficiency of an enterprise. Criticism of the public sector units is intended to prepare ground for their progressive privatisation or to allow entry of big business in similar fields of economic activity.

Criticism of the Railways relate to the efficiency of its infrastructure playing up the lapses in the transport of millions of passengers every day and is often in a particular area. Efficient working of an enter- appraisal and changes in the proforma for writing CC-0. In Public Domain. Gurukul Kangri Collection, Handwar

prise managed by the Government presupposes an egalitarian society, a reasonably satisfied labour and a management having integrity devotion and an understanding of the dynamics of socialist production.

In our country the politicians in power and the bureaucracy have been completely innocent of any socialist convictions, barring Pandit Nehru and of course the Indian Constitution. Every opportunity is taken to farm out some portion of the work of government undertakings to private contractors, The discussion in Parliament on the Railways cuts across all party lines; in fact a Railway. Minister in the sixties (later an important member of the Congress-O faction) remarked; the Indian Railways are like the street cows whom everybody feels free to hit with impunity.

Departmentalism

Just as economic distress finds expression in conflicts, based on religion, caste or nationality, only in the poorer areas of a city the discontent in respect of their career prospects vis-a-vis other services has over the years often led to infighting and jockeying for positions between officers of different railway

The civil engineers mostly from the Royal Engineering Army Corps occupied all key-posts during the British period but now all other departments of the Railways have access to senior administrative This feature is accentuated by lack of clarity in relative seniority of different departments.

Fortunately these dissensions are confined to the uppermost crust of the bureaucracy while the officers in the field have been interacting with amity all these years. The level of this infighting keeps on changing depending on the approach of the incumbents of the top posts in different departments.

Merit Assessment

The more ambitious members of railway manage more meritorious, ment, not necessarily the advance their prospects of promotion also at the expense of officers of their own department through the instrument of confidential reports, which have progressively been given overriding importance visa vis length of service. Fortunately for such officers many of these reports can be highly subjective, determined considerably by the social relations between the officer concerned and his superiors. Also varying judgements are possible on the merit of an office because of the innumerable factors coming into play in the final results.

Generally speaking, there is near unanimity about the exact ranking of the merit and integrity of an officer amongst the people working under him and around him. That is why it becomes nearly impos sible to deny his career rights to an officer of reputed merit even if somebody high up in the organisation wishes to do so. The railway administration, as a result of intensive him result of intensive him as a superior of intensive result of intensive lobbying by the ambitious officers has been characteristics. has been changing periodically the rules for the weightage to be weightage to be attached to annual assessment reports for purposes of promotion. The procedure introduced a few years ago allowing limited separations

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In this atmosphere the solid silent work required for full maintenance of rail assets and stable longterm efficiency, cannot get adequate place in an officer's thoughts. Consequently, the standards of efficiency of utilisation of rolling stock is nowhere near those achieved in other railway systems of similar dimensions. In the Defence services the reporting officer has to show and discuss the full annual assessment report and merit ranking to the officer reported upon and not only when an adverse comment has been made. Also much more emphasis is laid on pointing out a deficiency to an officer for rectification so that the organisation does not suffer for any length of time.

An officer in the Railway (or other civil departments) can suffer or gain unjustifiably in his career promotions not merely from deliberate subjectivism on the part of his superior, which is not an uncommon occurrence but also because of unconsious subjectivism or lack of deliberation and responsibility in assessment by, his superiors which are much more common. These aims of reducing subjectivism cannot be considered utopian or unrealistic. After all a very much higher measure of fair play is practised in the Defence services allowing men and officers to go about their duties with faith in unbiased assessment of their merit and fair play in their postings and transfers; this faith, of course, is an absolute requirement for the Defence organisation

and personnel.

Expecting the removal of the aberrations in assessment reports is not tantamount to the pursuit of any social or moral reform but for the sake of achieving greater efficiency in the Railways and as a result a much more rapid development of the nation's economy and peoples' standards of living. Human foibles cannot be eliminated but they can certainly be diminished and at least procedures and practices should give equal opportunity for a struggle between right' and 'wrong' and not be loaded against the former. Realism and the interests of the organisation demand that till the arrival of a climate and suitable criteria for objective judgements, the seniority of an officer should be modified only after a very careful deliberation.

But more than even the present system of confinitial reports dential reports, the absence of any clear rules for lucrative foreign postings or for transfers affects the education of children and has made the officers helpless in doing their jobs fearlessly. The vicious device which is for a device which has now become common is for a superior officer to ask an officer verbally to change his views by his views before recording them. In fact in order to win the goodwill of their seniors, escape transfers or damage. damage to their careers many officers anticipate the wishes of their superiors in sensitive matters before tecording their views. This is applicable to even officers at the topmost level as there are no rules for special special assignments after retirements which most of them crave for and which can be had only with the goodwill goodwill of the Ministers. In contrast some of the British Rail. British Railway officers before Independence would

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennal and eGangotri
of these reports has hardly reduced the scope for look askance at the merit of an officer working under them if they agreed too often with their views.

Corruption

There are varying opinions whether corruption on the Railways amongst the senior personnel is on the increase and to what extent and how it compares with corruption in other services. There is no doubt, however, that the impressions about widespread, traditional and petty corruption by junior railway staff experienced by large number of citizens daily give a distorted idea of the state of affairs amongst the senior personnel. Corruption in Government offices cannot be isolated from the general levels of corruption in the commercial world where it goes very often by the name of entrepreneural skill or political corruption which covers itself with ideology.

If special action is intended for government personnel only the corruption amongst lower staff should be treated as a category apart as it arises primarily from economic compulsions and can only be removed not by laying traps for a few unlucky ones but by simplifying procedures and increasing general efficiency. The process of removal of corruption amongst higher echelons should give more weightage to circumstantial evidence and reputation available plentifully in the office concerned with near unanimous conclusions. The integrity of an officer should be judged by a Board of Officers of known integrity mostly from the department itself instead of by officers of the CBI of the vigilance organisations who can only collect information.

Executive work should not be separated from the work of removal of corruptions in any organisation, as inefficiency and corruption go hand in hand. The responsibility for any officer indulging in malpractices should, to some extent, be of his immediate superior as it is impossible for the latter, if he is taking interest in his work, not to know about it

and not be able to curb it.

But the only effective method of substantially removing corruption is democracy in administration, that is giving greater voice to the people affected and the officials working under one suspected of lack of integrity - people in the mass never tell lies. The process of decision-making should involve clear expression of views without the subterfuges of unrecorded discussions and escaping responsibility by getting committees to record cryptic decisions.

Conclusion

No doubt things are at long last changing on the Indian Railways and clear improvements not only in frieght traffic but also in the performance of the Railways infrastructure are visible. The dark clouds of minisetrial interference no longer hang low over the heads of railway managers. This is perhaps because the present minister has identified himself with the Railways: The outlines of a better tomorrow have emerged on the horizon. But the nation has to think not only of tomorrow but a better day after as well. It is only to be hoped that the present Minister's youthful dynamism will help to end the grievances of the staff and officers running the Railways and their representations would (Continued on page 70)

Policies and Politics of Indian Railways (1853-1947)

GAUTAM CHATTERJEE

TODAY India has a highly efficient and gigantic railway network encompassing the entire nation! This Indian Railways began in humble surroundings in April, 1853. Since then the Railways grew but not in the atmosphere of public utility or national development; rather to further colonial exploitations.

Thus British built the Railways with colonial methods undermining the interest of the native population. This article aims to understand the subtle policies and politics of colonial rulers behind the

introduction of the Railways!

The British pondered over the introduction of the Railways in India in 1831-32, that is, 28 years after the ushering in of the railway era in England! The British looked towards India as a source of raw material and a ready market for British finished product. In the first half of the nineteenth century Sir Charles Wood, President of the Indian Board, suggested that if larger supply of cotton could be drawn from India, it would serve the colonial pur pose in a great way. In 1848 MacDonald Stephenson made a proposal for railway line from Calcutta to the North-Western Frontier. In the same year Manchester and Glasgow Chambers of Commerce strongly advocated the need of Railways in India for export of cotton from Bombay. Moreover Lord Dalhousie saw in the Railways of India the best field for investing that capital.

Other than the Commercial need of the colonial ruler the administrative reasons too encouraged the British to introduce the Railways in India. In 1848 Lord Hardinge, the then Governor-General, wrote in support of railway development that in India the facility of rapid concentration of infantry and artillery and stores might lead to the cheap preservation of insurrection which would lead to the safety of the empire. In this regard the brain-child of the Indian Railways, Lord Dalhousie, thought that "railway would provide increased facilities for administration and greater mobility to the military forces over large distances and thus strengthen the British hold over the colony". With the uprising of 1857 the British became more concerned about the rapid growth of

the railway's development.

The era of the Indian Railways was ushered in with the laying of 32 kilometres of line between Bombay and Thane in 1853. The first run was engineered by three engines which towed fourteen coaches and was flagged off from Bombay on April 16, 1853 by the then Chief Justice of Bombay.

The blue-print of the Indian Railways was spelled

out in a celebrated minutes of Lord Dalhousie on April 29, 1853 which guided the spirit of massive development of the Railways. In this minute he favoured the private agencies to construct railway lines. Thus the East India Railway Company and the Great Indian Peninsula Railway Company were engaged to promote railway enterprise. With this large sum of capital investment from England followed who were to get assured return under the newly coined 'guarantee system'. In this regard the famous economist A.I. Medovoy observed that "the private British firms which built the railways were guaranteed by the colonial administration a four to five per cent dividend on their capital ... on the total capital spent".

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Under the 'guarantee system' eight companies were engaged to build the railway. Those were East Indian Railways (1853); the Great Indian Peninsula Railway (1853); the Sindh Punjab of Delhi Company (1855); the Eastern Bengal Railway Company (1857); the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway (1855); and the Madras Railway Guaranteed Company (1853). These eight companies undertook to lay 5000 miles of railway line in India especially to

facilitate raw material export.

Dr N. Sanyal had rightly summarised that "the Indian 'guarantee system' killed efforts for economy, promoted recklessness and involved the country in liabilities beyond what the people could bear". The Russian economist has substantiated by saying.' In the process, almost £ 10 million were transferred annually to Britain in repayment of the railway debt"

Karl Marx had clarified why the Indian economy and the industrial process could not synchronise with the development of the Railways. He said: "You cannot maintain a net of railway over an immense country without introducing all those industrial process necessary to meet the immediate and current wants of railway locomotion, and out of which there must grow the application of machinery to those branches of industry not immediately connected with the railways."

Dr P. Shah commented upon the 'guaranter' system' thus: "One of the results of this was that the cost of construction of lines originated estimated at £ 9000 per mile for single lines and £ 13,000 for double lines worked out at £ 20,000 per mile. Furthermore, Dr Shah said that the East Indian Railway had incurred a cost of £ 30,000 per mile. Thus the cost of construction had a group to the construction had been supported by the construction of the construction of the construction had been supported by the construction of the Thus the cost of construction had risen high enough

(Continued on page 68)



Rail Ramblings

N.C.

One of my earliest recollections of a long train journey is when as a boy of six, I travelled with my mother from Calcutta to Patiala where my

grandfather lived.

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The prestigious Punjab Mail of those days took two days and two nights to reach Lahore from Howrah, and there was one coach which went upto Rawalpindi. Another star performer was the Frontier Mail from Bombay to Lahore via Delhi and on to Peshawar — supposed to be the fastest at that time. Then there were two Bombay Mails from Calcutta — one via Allahabad and the other via Nagpur. The Madras Mail was also a top-bracket train along the eastern coast, but the longest route covered was by the Grand Trunk Express from Delhi to Madras — looking like a backbone on the map of India.

The super was the weekly Imperial Indian Mail, with half a dozen stops between Calcutta and Bombay, meant for the passengers taking the steamer to London. That's why it used to be also called the Boat Train. There were no air flights those days, all intercontinental travel was by sea. The Boat Train was meant for the burra sahibs — the British officials, the jute-mill bosses and the tea garden planters. It was timed to meet the mail service between Bombay and London, the flagship of P&O. The train used to go straight to the jetty, so that the sahibs could hop into the steamer with the least hassle. As young kids we used to look with wonder at the white or blue train streaking through stations. This was the only corridor train of those days specially built for the rulers — the pride of the

There was no aircondition system in the trains. But the upper class compartments were kept cool by huge in the middle by huge ice slabs placed on containers in the middle under the fan. There was of course no such facility for the Third Classes in which very often even the windows would not shut.

Those days, there was no reservation of seats or berths for the Inter and Third Class passengers. This was the Class passengers. The was the exclusive privilege of the upper classes. The British owners of the Railways adhered to the caste System the First Class almost exclusively for the White solith White sahibs, with only a few Indians belonging to that club. Then there was the Second Class mostly for well-off Len there was the Second Class mostly for well-off Indians and the less fortunate sahibs, quite often Andians and the less fortunate sahibs, quite often Anglo-Indians. The Inter Class passengers were mostly the sardinewere mostly desi middle class, while the sardine-Packed Third Class was for the plebs. The servants

of the First Class sahibs had a narrow strip of a compartment in the same carriage as the First so that they could attend to the sahibs at every halt. There was no toilet in the servants' compartment,

but only a covered hole on the floor.

There was no corridor train in those days. The long distance trains would have a fairly long halt of about 20 minutes at stations which would be reached at the meal times for the sahibs-for breakfast (used to be called chhota hazri) the lunch and dinner with a shorter halt for afternoon tea. The Refreshment Rooms at those stations were well-stocked and as soon as the train would come, the bearers would be seen dashing about with trays held precariously to serve in the compariment, or the sahibs quickly turning up at the refreshment room. As for the 'natives', the push-cart hawker selling sweets. garam puri and fruits were always available. And so many varieties of hawkers - selling souvenirs. toys, sticks, even cloth pieces. In most stations, the platform tea was served mostly in clay cups. There were drinking water vendors-strictly along communal lines—serving Hindu paani and Muslim paani.

Inside the compartment, there were no fans in the lower classes. The Inter Class had a thin mattress, and the Third Class a hard-wooden bench. These carriages were hardly cleaned during the journey and the passengers were well covered with soot, as we had only coal engines in those days. But those engines were a beauty: the high-speed express and mail train were drawn by huge, fat-bellied engines while the passenger trains had engines looking like camels with long necks. The drivers and the guards in the long distance fast trains were fair complexioned — quite a few castaways from England, and a growing number of Anglo-Indians, They looked smart and well-fed, well-dressed - the airs of the

sahib.

So many scenes from the early days of travelling by train crowd in the memory lane. My first train journey on my own was when as a schoolboy, I took the train from Sealdah (Calcutta's Number Two station after Howrah) to a place called Kanchrapara, a distance of about 30 miles, where there was a railway colony and one of my uncles was a senior officer. It was such a thrill, travelling on my own. You look out for the name of every station on the way and jot them down, as if you are going on an exploration into a new country. And then getting down, crossing the overbridge, watching trains passing beneath your feet, and then most

MAINTRBAM April 15, 1989

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reluctantly, handing over the ticket to the collector at the gate, almost beseeching him to let me keep it as the memento of my first train ride on my own.

Even growing up the train journey has never been dull for me. Rather, fascinating experiences of meeting and jostling with a rich cross-section of our society with its infinite variety. During the war years, when I turned a newspaper reporter, it was an ordeal travelling by train. In the deep interior of famine-stricken Bengal, a Third Class train journey was indeed a test of physical endurance. First, to get into the compartment itself was a heroic feat. With the Third Class always full to capacity, one had to literally ram in one's body into the compartment, if not through the door, very often through the window. There was a technique of doing it first force your baggage, preferably a tin trunk, and then squeeze in yourself. To think of getting a seat was like dreaming a win in a lottery. Once I covered a seven-hour journey in Assam, throughout standing, not even having the space to put the small bag on the floor. To get into the toilet was like conducting a military operation, as very often an overflow passenger with initiative would break in there.

In the midst of it all, as the train would chug along, a strange camaraderie would be built up among the passengers, the very same people who might have been resisting each other only a few minutes before - some trying to push into the compartment, others warding off the intruders. And

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennal and eGangotring train those days did not breed contempt, rather a warm fellow-feeling - the

lingering tradition of the yatra.

The air-conditioned trains of today —the Deluxes. the Rajdhanis and the Shatabdis - no doubt have their attractions. You cover long distances in great comfort and reach your destination very soon - no dust, no glare, meal on your lap and you are lulled into sleep. But all this is intensely inward-looking almost claustrophobic. You miss the colour, the sound, the crowd, the bustle of a busy platform and the eats - the samosa at Ghaziabad, the laddoo at Sondilla, the rabri at Tundla, the mango at Banaras the lichi at Muzaffarpur, and the mihidana at Burdwan (now purified as Bardhaman). And the passengers within an air-conditioned coach are like your neighbours in a multistoreyed high-rise city apartment building - only nodding and smiling in passing encounters, hardly striking up an acquaintance.

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As a reporter, I always found those over-crowded. often physically strenuous train journeys of yesterday far more rewarding, providing me with the insights of what the people, Mr. A and Mrs B, would be thinking - much more authentic than a hundred interviews. You would find an extrovert rubbing shoulders with the quiet silent one of few words. Listen to them and there opens up a fascinating world, a magnificent kaleidoscope, a feel of the real public mood — the heart-beat of a great nation of

continental dimension.

Chatterjee: Railways (1853-1947)

(Contd. from page 66)

and the Government of India had to pay about £ 13.5 million by 1868 to make good the guaranteed

Thus the 'guarantee system', which remained in vogue for 20 years, came under heavy criticism and public opinion in England too was highly critical of the system. The British administration under Lord Lawrence took up the charge of construction of/ railway from 1869-81 which was ultimately termed as 'a very slow progress' as the mileage the state gained in eleven years was limited to 3297 miles. In a comparative statement it can be stated that average return from the railway laying yielded only 2.15 per cent whereas private companies could gain a return upto 6.20 per cent.

In 1882, when the colonial administration had run into depression, the task of development of the Railways was again given to the private agencies under the system 'New guarantee system' which worked on lease for 25 years. Yet the Government armed itself with more powers to control these private agencies. This yielded results as by 1900 the railway line had increased its mileage from 10,069

miles to 24,752 miles of iron path.

All these developmental efforts culminated in a positive gain for the colonial rulers as one can see even in the initial years of the railways, raw cotton exports increased from £ 1.8 million in 1849 to £ 4.3 million in 1858. Administratively the control of the British over India was further strengthened. The efficiency of the army and civil administrations on which the Crown sustained its supremacy had increased.

In 1905 the Railway Board was established and its power was enhanced in 1908 and the Railway Department was set up independent of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. From the records it is gathered that by 1914 the Railways covered 34,659 miles. Furthermore by 1930 it reached 41,724 miles.

In September 1924 railway finance was separated from general finance and in this year a sum of Rs 150 crores was allocated for railway expenditure and with it the Indian' Railway efficiency was enhanced. By 1930 it carried 634 million passengers and freight weighing 91 million tonnes.

Noted historian Dr Parasraj Shah had analysed the war time railway economics and wrote: 'The Gross traffic receipts rose from Rs 94 crores in 1938-39 to Rs 226 crores to the general revenue over 1939-46 The railway revenue fund also increased by Rs 76

crores over the same period."

At the time of transfer of power India had 35 railway companies operating countrywide and connected by a network of railway stations number ing more than thousand, Many coach factories were built, which facilitate the growth of the Railway indigenously. Although the construction of the Railways had greatly affected India's economic development but the Railways affected India's development but the British unconsciously paved the path for the future development of the Railways in spite of the fact that good wishes were backing from the side of the colonial British. And all these led to the establishment of a new economic order within the country which was revamped and streamlined the post-independent the post-independence period.

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The Invisible Hands

VINOO HORA

RECENTLY the Railways have been making head-lines what with the announcement of the Railway hudget for the year 1989-1990 and with the Shatabdi Express heralding in a new era of superfast trains. A great feat for the railwaymen indeed. But what about the railway 'wives' those 'invisible hands' who contribute their mite to the success of their men? Behind every great man is a woman - an age-old saying which holds good even today. And it is not only as efficient housewives and understanding companions that the railway wives have contributed towards the progress of the Railways and thus the nation, they have organised themselves into one of the country's largest voluntary associations of women in a government undertaking.

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In a message to the Railway Women's Central Organisation (RWCO) in March 1987, Madhavrao Scindia, the Minister of State for Railways, acknowledged this when he said: "As a member of the railway family I appreciate this great contribution from each member of the family and their high level of motivation in contributing to national development. While I say this I am very much aware of the significant contribution made by the Railway Women's Welfare Organisation in building up this high morale and motivational level of our employees. There is no doubt that these welfare organisations and their central organisation, the RWCO, have done yeomen service in promoting talent and offering succour to the needy and the distressed among the railway families...." A feather in the cap indeed for the RWCO but a well-deserved laurel, if one were to glance at the achievements of this organisation ever since its inception in 1962.

The RWCO is always ready to help those in distress. It was set up primarily to mobilise funds for the welfare of the jawans at the time of the Chinese aggression. Thereafter a regular constitution was drawn up to channelise the welfare activities in aid of multifarious noble causes. During the Chinese and Pak aggressions the members of the RWCO worked tirelessly and presented cash, gold ornaments, clothing, food and medicines worth several lakhs of rupees to the then Prime Minister, Indira

In 1966-67, the RWCO contributed Rs 2 lakhs to the Prime Minister's Drought Relief Fund besides utensils carie medicines, utensils, saris, grain, milk-powder and medicines, to combat drov grain, milk-powder and medicines, to combat drought in Bihar and Eastern UP.

Similarly, cash and kind relief was provided by RWCO to be and kind relief was provided by the RWCO to Bangladesh refugees, flood and cyclone

Apart from helping the distressed, the RWCO has encouraged scouts, sportsmen, artistes and granted Gurukul Kangri Collection, Haridwar MAINSTREAM April 15, 1989

scholarships to needy students. Once a year an arts exhibition and on-the-spot drawing and painting competition are held at Rail Bhavan and prizes are given to the budding artistes as incentives.

Apart from financial aid and encouragement to their Class IV employees, the RWCO has been enterprising enough to open a Handicraft Centre (affiliated to the Usha Shilp Kendra) where wives of Class IV employees are given training in embroidery and tailoring. Four years ago they started a music school which is also running satisfactorily. Another landmark in the history of the RWCO is the establishment of a library for railway employees. It contains about 1000 books in English and Hindi and subscribes to a number of periodicals.

The RWCO is the apex body functioning in Rail Bhavan, the zonal organisations being autonomous affiliated units. At present there are 15 zonal organisations, nine on the Zonal Railways, six in the production units and one each at the RDSO (Lucknow) and the Metro Railway (Calcutta). Each Zonal Railway Organisation has branches in each division. Thus, the RWCO is a well-knit organisation covering the entire length and breadth of the country fostering national integration in no uncertain manner.

The policy followed by the RWCO is chalked out by the President, the wife of the Chairman of the The lady President plans out Railway Board. ways and means of collecting funds to successfully carry out their objectives. To collect funds over the years they put their heads together and organised cultural programmes, film shows, charity recitals by well-known artistes in the field of music and dance and by way of printing brochures and collecting advertisement tariff. In 1987, under the auspices of the then President Chitra Narain, the RWCO hit upon a novel idea of collecting funds. They organised a one day festival cricket match in New Delhi. The two teams were led by Kapil Dev and the Minister of State for Railways, Madhavrao Scindia. The cricket teams comprised of celebrities from the world of cricket, the silver screen, politicians, cricketers, and prominent personalities. A festive way of making money indeed!

On August 1, 1987 R. K. Jain assumed the Chairmanship of the Railway Board and his wife Saroj Jain became the Railways' first lady. She accepted her duties as the Chairman's wife with great sobriety, dedication and fortitude. She brought with her new ideas and aims. A lady who had been content thus far to be a mere housewife suddenly found herself confronted with the mammoth task of presiding over an

(Contd. on page 74)

Shatabdi: Speed and Luxury

G. KRISHNA MOHAN RAO

In the early hours of March 24, 1989 the country's fastest and most powerful train took off on its inaugural run from New Delhi. The destination: Kanpur, the train: Shatabdi

Express.

Shatabdi nine coach The Express, propelled by the wholly indigenous 4000 horse power WAP-3 electric engine, is easily the most luxurious train that the fourth largest railway system in the world has come up with to date, and is an improvement on the Rajdhani and the earlier Shatabdi Express introduced on July 10, 1988 and running from New Delhi to Bhopal.

The passengers on the inaugural run consisted of a whole lot of VIPs including the Railway Minister, his Deputy, a host of senior railway officials and a

press party.

The flower-bedecked Shatabdi, India's fastest train, was ceremoniously flagged off at 6.20 AM. The presence of Railway Minister Scindia and his Deputy Mahabir Prasad, and the Capital's political bigwigs -- Jagdish Tytler, J.P. Aggarwal, and the Mayor, M.S. Saathi and a group of other polyvastra khadi clad politicians at the ceremonial function much before rise gave the impression that this train was also carrying a political message to the Hindi heartland in this election year.

Running five days a week (Monday to Friday) the train has a speed of 130 kmph and which, according to railway officials, can be accelerated to

160 kmph under, 'ideal track conditions'.

The train, which according to Scindia is a tribute to Nehru to mark his birth centenary, is the ultimate in luxury. The train has nine coaches; seven air conditioned chair cars each with a capacity of 67 seats and two generator-cum-guard's break vans with vestibules. The seating designed in aircraft style - comfortable padded seats enough leg room and make-shift folding table for dining and writing. Each coach has an attached pantry which is equipped with water heaters/coolers and hot cases to serve fresh meals and beverages during the journey. The fair includes delicious breakfast, tea, ice cream and the return journey menu includes tea, soup and dinner.

Another unique feature about the high-tech Shatabdi is the public address system through which travellers are informed about the importance of each passing station and are also treat-

ed to soft taped music.

Going by the comforts provided in the Shatabdi one gets the feeling that the Prime Minister still considers taking the nation (at least a privileged section) to the twentyfirst century among his top priorities and the train is appropriately numbered 2003/ 2004.

Madhavrao Scindia on the speeding train spoke at length about the working of the Indian Railways and their futuristic plans with special emphasis on the new proposed railway projects targetted for the Eighth Plan.

revealed that the Railways were considering the introduction of similar trains on the Delhi-Chandigarh and Howrah-Jamshedpur routes. On being queried by this correspondent on whether priority should be accorded for constructing new lines and updating old lines or provision of nonstop executive train for the privileged sections of the society. Scindia justified the Shatabdi concept of inter-city fast trains by saying: "Such trains were needed to keep pace with the requirements of the fast developing industrial economy.'

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After reaching Kanpur at 11.10 AM a simple ceremonial function was organised where Scindia, Mahabir Prasad and others addressed the public to announce the Railways' gift and benevolence to the great indus-

trial city.

Receiving the guests at the public meeting the Kanpur Mayor remarked: "We want this train to start from Kanpur in the morning and return by evening." Though Scindia agreed that this should be done but he said the Kanpur station did not have a 'pit line' 'washing line' to main this hi-tech train. He added: "The great city deserves this facility...the moment we gel back to Delhi I will look into the matter."

The introduction of the Delhi-Kanpur Shatabdi has doubtless added a new dimension to the Indian Railways. But a nagging query remains: to what extent does such a luxury train benefit the ordinary passenger and meet the needs of the common man?

P.N.S Bedi: Railway Management

(Contd. from page 65)

attended to without delay though not necessarily with the promptitude enforced for replying to communications from the Members of Parliament.

The tradition of devoted service in the Indian Railways cannot be expected to survive for all times to come: already there has been a considerable amount of dilution in this respect. Nor can the industrial pace of the Railways be considered permanent feature making no demands on the administration to ensure it. For the really efficient functioning of the Railways, the play of baneful human foibles at the top needs to be curbed. Achieve ment of substantial results will require the railwal administration to be more humane and responsive of the problems of officials and staff and the practice of an open administration without too many indeferrable instructions aim sible instructions given verbally and secretly.

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North-Eastern Railway: Towards Excellence

GAURI SHANKER

THE North-Eastern Railway which came into existence in 1875 with 61 kilometres railway line constructed as a famine relief between Dalsing Sarai and Darbhanga via Samastipur in Bihar State. presently stretches from Achrera in the west to Katihar in the east and from Raxaul - the gateway to Nepal in the north to Allahabad in the south. With a total route length of 5163 kilometres, this Railway has 922 kilometres of broad gauge (BG) from Lucknow to Katihar and Moradabad to Ramnagar and 4241 kilometres on metre gauge (MG) system.

Besides serving the transport needs of over 12 crores people of Uttar Pradesh and North Bihar, this railway provides link between North-Eastern parts of the country as well as North-Eastern States of Assam, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh on both

MG and BG systems.

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After independence in 1947, in order to streamline the working of the war-wrecked railway system, the efforts of the Government were directed to identify the new areas of development to take up the role of economic regeneration by re-strengthening the transport infrastructure, which is the backbone of economic and commercial activities. Accordingly, the Railway formulated ambitious plans to give a new look to organisation and its services through improvements in traction, track rehabilitation, improved passenger amenities, BG modernisation of signal and tele-communication conversion, system besides introduction and extension of train services etc. The North-Eastern Railway, one of the nine constituents of the national railway network, also took up its role to serve the people inhabiting this area. In course of time, the population increased considerably and industries grew enormously. The agricultural and marketing activities also looked up and tourism-promotion received new impetus. All these factors resulted in tremendous increase in

With the high density of population of this area and phenomenal growth in human activities in various fields of development, the North-Eastern Railway is development, the North-Eastern Railway is destined to be a predominantly passengeroriented system.

As a principle mode of transport in the regions covering a large tract of UP and Bihar, the North-Sastern Railway with the resources available, has been enlarging its capacity to cope with the growing demand of amenities demand of more train services and better amenities

The author is General Manager of the North-Eastern Railway.

by better utilisation of assets and better manmanagement. Despite severe resource constraints and heavy odds such as droughts and floods, the Railway is committed to serve the people of the region as well as the nation as a whole and continuing its march to scale greater heights of achievements in the field of passenger-services.

With completion of 844 kilometres of trunk route from Lucknow to Katihar in 1984, the scenario of the service pattern of this Railway assumed a new dimension. Now this vast region has been linked

directly with the rest of the country.

To meet the challenges of dynamic changes taking place and to fulfil the aspirations of the people of the region served by it, the steps taken include introduction of new trains, revamping of train services, extending run of trains, speeding up and dieselisation of the trains, augmentation and modernisation of facilities and passenger amenities.

Passenger Services

Approximately 18 crores of passengers are booked every year on the NE Railway and the number is likely to increase in the years to come. Presently 90 Mail/Express and 416 passenger trains run daily on this Railway. Development of industries in different parts of the country, opening up of employment potential for people from different states has also resulted in increase in demand for movement of long distance traffic across the country. In order to meet the aspirations of the people, this Railway has provided long distance passenger services from this region to Delhi, Bombay, Amritsar, Jaipur, Jodhpur, Madras, Bangalore, Cochin, etc. To meet the pressing demand of the public of Gorakhpur and Eastern UP, one pair of additional Express trains 973 Up/ 974 Dn Shaheed Express between Gorakhpur and New Delhi has been introduced four days in a week from October 1, 1988. This has eased overcrowding in 153 Up/154 Dn Vaishali Express trains. To facilitate the travelling public of Mithila and Kanpur area, two pairs of MG express trains viz. 53 Up/54 Dn Mithilanchal express trains between Barauni Junction and Jayanagar and another 3 Up/4 Dn between Lucknow and Kanpur Anwarganj have been introduced from May 1, 1988. 934 Up/933 Dn Bombay VT-Lucknow Super Fast Express trains previously running four days in a week, have been rescheduled to run daily with effect from November 1, 1988. 913 Up/914 Dn Bombay VT-Muzaffarpur bi-weekly Janata Express trains have been extended to run from Chhapra Junction from May 1, 1988.

To meet the ever-increasing demands of travel in

N. E. RAILWAY

Privileged to Serve A Panorama of Cultural, Historical and Natural spots of tourist attraction.

AYODHYA

: Stands on the bank of the sacred Saryu hallowed by the birth of Lord Rama.

ALLAHABAD

: Holy confluence of Ganga-Yamuna and invisible Saraswati with several other

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places of tourist interest like Fort, Khusrubagh etc.

MATHURA & VRINDABAN

: On the bank of holy Yamuna, the Leela Bhumi of Lord Krishna.

VARANASI

: On the bank of sacred Ganga sanctified by the sacred temples and Ghats and

famous for abode of Baba Vishwanath.

LUCKNOW

: Capital of Uttar Pradesh situated at the bank of Gomti river with historical

reminiscences.

BAHRAICH

: Famous for the tombs of Syed Salar Masaud Ghazi and Bale Mian.

MAGHAR

: Famous for the mystic poet Sant Kabir's tomb.

NAUGARH

: Nearest Railway station to approach Piparawa (Kapilavastu)-Lord Buddha's

birth place.

SARNATH

: Where Buddha preached his first sermon.

KUSHINAGAR

: Where Buddha attained Mahaparinirvan.

SHRAVASTY

: Where Buddha spent twenty-four rainy seasons.

VAISHALI

: Where a Republic was established for the first time in the world. The birth

place of Lord Mahabir also.

SITAMARHI

· Very close to the birth place of Devi Sita, wife of Lord Rama.

SONPUR .

: Where exist the mythological battle place of 'Gaj-Grah' and the famous Harihar

Nath temple.

PATNA

: Situated at the bank of sacred river Ganga, Capital of Bihar State and centre

of various ancient cultures connected with Hajipur station by Gandhi Setu.

RAXAUL

: Gate-way to Nepal and its capital Kathmandu where exists the famous Pashupati

Nath temple.

NAINITAL

: A popular tourist resort replete with natural beauty and several others in the vicinity like Almora, Ranikhet, Kumaun etc. and Jim Corbett Park of Inter-

national fame. The nearest rail head is Kathgodam.

For a pleasure trip to all these Centres, N.E. Railway is always at your service.

CHIEF PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER

N.E. RAILWAY/GORAKHPUR

Eastern UP and North Bihar, four new trains are being introduced from May 1, 1989.

Two long distance bi-weekly Express trains—one between Gorakhpur and Hyderabad via Lucknow and Bhopal and the other between Chhapra and Sealdah and two new tri-weekly express trains one between Gorakhpur and Jammu Tawi and the other between Saharsa and Sonpur will provide great relief to the travelling public of this region.

The frequency of 911 Up/912 Dn Gorakhpur Cochin express trains will also be increased from one day to two days in a week.

Passenger Amenities

The NE Railway is making sustained efforts to provide better amenities to its users with the spirit that customers are our valued guests. Various basic amenities at stations and in trains for the convenience of the travelling public, like waiting halls, benches, lighting arrangements, drinking water supply, improved latrines, pucca platforms and booking offices have already been provided at almost all stations.

Retiring Rooms

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There are 93 Retiring Rooms and 18 Dormitories available at 59 important stations of this Railway having capacity of 302 beds. AC Retiring Rooms are also available at Lucknow, Gorakhpur, Muzaffarpur and Barauni Junction. There is a proposal for providing one additional retiring room at Ballia station.

A Deluxe Retiring Room with all modern amenities at Siwan station in Varanasi Division has been

constructed at a cost of Rs 2.75 lakhs.

Travel Bags

The facility of travel bag is available at five pairs of BG trains and two pairs of MG trains. These trains are — Vaishali Express, Gorakhpur-Lucknow Express, Gwalior Mail, Gorakhpur-Howrah Express, Gorakhpur-Howrah Bi-Weekly Express, Lucknow-Kothagodam Express Maruadhar Express. and Lucknow-Jodhpur

Booking & Reservation

The reservation facility exists at 36 stations on this Railway. The average number of berths booked daily works out to 7624, covering 112 trains.

(a) Under the Nodal Point System, Secured-Memo scheme has been introduced from January, 1988 between Gorakhpur-Howrah, Gorakhpur-New Delhi and Gorakhpur-Bombay VT.

(b) In order to reduce time for expediting messages for onward/return journey reservations, facsimile service has been introduced between Goral-he service will be Gorakhpur and Lucknow. This system will be extended to and Lucknow. The system will be extended between Gorakhpur and Calcutta, Delhi and Bombay very shortly.

(c) Six Self-Ticket Printing Machines are being procured for issue of no-reserved tickets at

(d) Under the scheme of computerisation of passenger reservation Lucknow Junction station

computerisation of reservation at Gorakhpur has also been approved in 1989-90 budget.

Railway Enquiry System

Enquiry offices have been provided at 43 stations on this Railway. A lot of improvement has been made in Railway Enquiry system. The Enquiry offices at Lucknow, Sonpur and Samastipur have been directly linked with the Control Office resulting in saving of time being previously taken in getting train position at the enquiry office. At Lucknow, Samastipur, Sonpur, Gorakhpur, Bareilly City, Fatehgarh and Farrukhabad stations, the Public Address System is functioning directly from Control Offices with its continuance from station also.

In order to improve the Railway Enquiry at Gorakhpur 'Automatic Announcing System' has been introduced with 'Hunting Facility'. Under this scheme, the subscriber, while dialling any of the three P&T phone numbers will get automatically connected to a moving cassette on a tape recorder to listen to the latest recorded position of the incoming six trains at a time.

Model Stations

Under the scheme of remodelling of important stations of NE Railway, six stations - Kathgodam, Lucknow Junction, Allahabad City, Muzaffarpur, Gorakhpur and Samastipur have been selected to be developed as 'Model Station' at an estimated cost of Rs 8.08 crores. During the year 1987-88, an amount of Rs 1.26 crores has been spent on amenities like drinking water, catering improvement, electronic boards for passenger information, etc. During the year 1988-89, a sum of Rs 1.30 crores has been spent on enlarging the amenities at these stations. At Gorakhpur station, the new Second Class Booking Office is estimated to cost Rs 40 lakhs, provision of 'Yatri Niwas' at a cost Rs 57 lakhs and improvement to circulating area at a cost of Rs 50 lakhs and provision of a second Footover Bridge at a cost of Rs 36 lakhs.

Catering

In order to streamline catering and vending services, the kitchens are being modernised by providing most modern gadgets and installing the latest cooking devices. Modernised base-kitchens have been provided at Gorakhpur-Lucknow and Barauni The renovation scheme of existing kitchens/refreshment rooms at Raxaul, Samastipur at an estimated cost of Rs 27.60 lakhs is in progress. The work of Samastipur catering unit is likely to be completed by 30th June, 1989. Six Electronic Cash Registers (Siling Machines) have been provided at catering units of Lucknow Junction, Gorakhpur, Samastipur, Barauni Junction, Kathgodam and Muzaffarpur stations.

Electrification of Railway Stations

has been included in level-II PRs projects. The work is in progress. Electrification of 13 more

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stations is proposed in the works programme of 1989-90.

A total of 210 water coolers have been provided at 38 stations. The work is in progress to provide 31

more water coolers at stations.

Some 147 Diesel Generating sets have been installed for emergency power supply at major stations on the railway for water supply and station lighting during the power interruption period. Provision for 39 more D G sets is in progress.

Construction Projects

BG Train Services on Moradabad-Ramnagar section in Izatnagar Division, after conversion of the 78 kilometres, MG track were opened to traffic on June 3, 1988. The construction work on 84 kilometres Rampur-Haldwani new BG section in the Izatnager Division is in progress at an estimated cost of Rs 38.52 crores. The foundation stones of the new station buildings at Kemari, Bilaspur and Rampur stations were laid on November 2, 1988. The project is targetted for completion in March, 1991. The conversion work on 160.84 kilometres Varanasi-Bhatni MG line into BG is in progress at an estimate cost of Rs 70.75 crores out of which an amount of Rs. 21.02 crore has already been spent upto March 1988 and during the year 1988-89

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennal and eGangotri provided to this project, programme of Rs 8.60 crores have been provided to this project, All works in yard, formating and bridges have been completed.

In the 1989-90 budget, the provision of Rs 23 crores for the Bhatni Varanasi conversion work has been made. This would accelerate the progress and major portion of this work would be completed by March 1990.

A sum of Rs 5 crores has been provided for Rampur-Haldwani new BG Project.

A total Rs 1.5 crores has been allocated for the BG conversion of 171 kilometres Chhapra-Aunrihar Metre Gauge section estimated to cost about Rs 85 crores. This project would provide a through link between the two BG main line sections of Varanasi-Mughalsarai on Northern Railway and Gorakhpur-Chhapra-Barauni on the North-Eastern Railway. facilitating smooth movement of traffic to North Bihar and to the North-Eastern Region.

The survey for a new BG line from Sahjanwa near Gorakhpur to Doharighat and conversion of Doharighat-Indara MG line to BG is in progress.

These schemes, when completed, will provide not only adequate travel facility to the people but also give impetus to the growth of regional economy with the development of industry and trade.

Vinoo Hora: The Invisible Hands

(Contd. from page 69)

apex body like the RWCO and co-ordinating the working of its affiliated units. A lady of strong determination, she has picked up the gauntlet and has introduced many new schemes and set-up establishments like Shramika, a handicraft centre at Sarojini Nagar, the Rail Emporium at Rail Bhavan and a 'masala centre' where wives of Class IV employees are given a stipend to grind fresh and adulteration-

free spices.

Much labour and effort has gone into the setting up of these establishments but modest as she is, Saroi Jain does not claim credit for it. "No achievement was possible without the co-operation of my colleagues," said she. I leafed through a brochure and raised an eyebrow at the big names splashed across the pages of the brochures - the donors. Perhaps my expression was eloquent enough for she said: "I do not believe in collecting funds via advertisements. As long as I am at the helm of RWCO affairs I shall refrain from printing brochures as collecting money in this way involves obligations, we do not want our men to be put under pressure." This year money was raised by selling raffle tickets. A simple forthright lady she does not believe in extravagance nor in pomp and show. Every penny earned from the sale at the centres, and sale of lottery tickets is spent on charity. So, readers, should you shop at one of the railway bentres, you will be contributing to charity without straining your monthly budget! Saroj Jain believes in the upliftment of body and soul. She has introduced among other things, yoga classes and Gita Paath which has been a great success not only with ladies but many railway menkul darger multitude dur

too. She lays great importance to shramdan.

The year 1990 has been declared as the literacy year by our Government. What are the RWCO's

plans in this respect?

"I have given much thought to this and I plan to discuss it with my colleagues at our annual meeting to be held on April 27-28-29, 1989, in New Delhi. This is a national problem and we (RWCO) must help in tackling it." Meanwhile, I am told that the Railways do have voluntary workers, Bharat Scouts, who have taken on the responsibility of educating the illiterate Railway employees and their families. But as yet it is not a concentrated effort. A fact soon to be remedied, I surmised.

Being a women's organisation, does RWCO help damsels in distress, does it help solve dowry problems, does it take up cudgels in defence of women victimised by their husbands who might be railway

employees? - I was curious to know.

"No," said, Saroj Jain. "This is one field not yet ventured upon by the RWCO. Mainly it is the feat that our motives might be misunderstood and we might appear to be interfering. I would very much like to, though." Well, surely, somebody has to

make a headway?

Saroj Jain believes in dharam and karam and as a senior officer's wife she sometimes finds hersell Constrained from going all out to do social service. Although she gets help from members of the RWCO she feels that most of the she feels that most of the time it is enforced, very few are voluntary workers. This saddens her, But as the Chairman's wife she feels she must set an example and so she carries on, regardless. Perhaps day, she muses when he is regardless. day, she muses, when her husband retires she will salle to do more for the able to do more for the downtrodden and for

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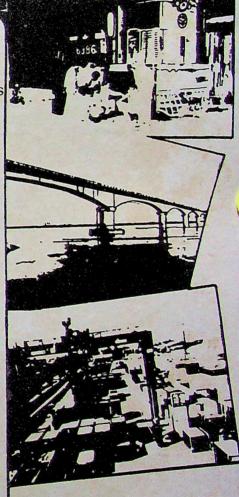
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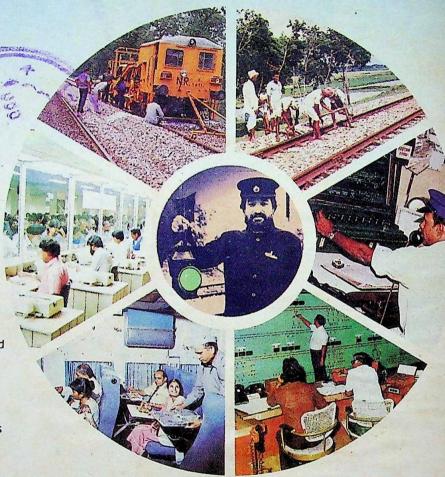
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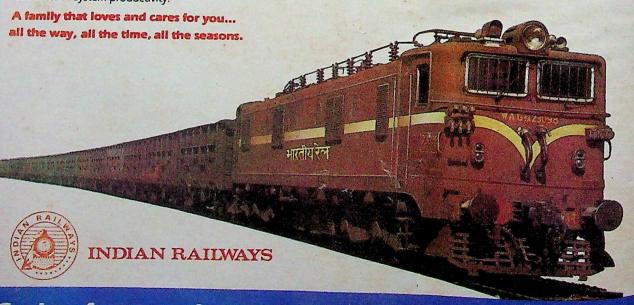
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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Battle Lines

THE storm over the Presidential dismissal of the Bommai-led Janata Dal Ministry on April 21 has assumed extraordinary national significance and deserves to be examined and its implications identified. In fact, the toppling operation in Karnataka has two aspectsone relates to the role and perspective of the ruling party at the Centre, and the other to the ruling party at the State and its repercussions on the Opposition politics at the national level. What is actually happening today — as borne out by the debate in Parliament — is that each side is accusing the other for bringing about the President's Rule in Karnataka. It is worth examining the case of

The Bommai Ministry in Karnataka was certainly in a precarious situation. For one thing, the Deve Gowda faction refused to dissolve the Janata Party and join the newly-formed Janata Dal. This naturally cut into the strength of the ruling Janata Dal. It is known in Janata politics that Deve Gowda has always been close to Chandra Shekhar and therefore it is but natural to get the impression that Deve Gowda's intransigence has had Chandra Shekhar's acquiescence, if not consent. The antipathy between Chandra Shekhar and Hegde is widely known, and so too is Chandra Shekhar's allergy towards the Janata Dal chief, Vishwanath Pratap Singh. It is in this context that some sections of the Janata Dal have been pointing the accusing finger at Chandra Shekhar for the ouster of the Bommai Ministry.

The Karnataka Ministry was further hit by the constant sniping by Subramaniam Swamy since the days of Hegde. Hegde's resignation from Chief Ministership because of the detection of telephonetapping under his Ministry, did help the Congress-I, and there is every reason for it to be grateful to Subramaniam Swamy's campaign against the Janata Dal in Karnataka. Whether Swamy was being egged on by Chandra Shekhar or was doing on his own or on behalf of some other elements is immaterial.

The immediate cause of the defection within the Janata Dal that brought the Ministry down was Bommai's expansion of it. Though he accommodated as many as 39 in his Ministry, those who were left out became an easy prey to the allurements for revolt. All this brought about not only the depletion of the Janata Dal's strength in the Assembly but a considerable erosion of its influence in the public mind.

In this situation, it would have been the normal thing for the Governor to have asked the Chief Minister to face the Assembly. There is thus a clear case for the Janata Dal to claim that its demand for a trial of strength in the Assembly was in conformity with the time-honoured democratic convention, and that what the Governor has done is arbitrary and undemocratic.

At the same time, the Karnataka crisis comes as a warning bell for the Janata Party Its leadership has to realise that its objective of deteating the Congress-lat the poll is certainly not going to be a cakewalk. Let it have no illusion that it has the prospect of an avalanche victory at the poll as it happened to the Janata Party at the 1977 elections. Even the current Opposition campaign against the Karnataka Governor's dismissal of the Bommai Ministry loses its edge as one recalls the Janata Government action in 1977 in getting the then Governor sack the Devraj Urs Ministry without a trial of strength in the Assembly.

Rajiv Gandhi's strength certainly does not lie in the durability of his party or the performance record of his Government. Instead, he and his establishment will always be on the look out for every chink in the Opposition's armour and will exploit to the maximum all squabbles and conflicts in the Opposition camp. The differences between the National Front and the Left and between it and the BJP are going to be highlighted by the Congress-1 propaganda as also by secret operations on the part of the ruling establishment.

Within the National Front itself, the Congress-I target will naturally be the Janata Dal. Every assaulting army makes a target of the adversary's citadel, and in the Opposition camp, particularly within the National Front, the Janata Dal is the citadel. Unless the tensions and quarrels within the Janta Dal are settled and personality clashes smoothened out, this party led by Vishwanath Pratap Singh will face a serious challenge in the coming months from the ruling party. This time, it is going to be a no-holdsbarred contest. Against the Bofors scandal and the Thakkar Report mess, the Rajiv establishment is bound to spotlight Devi Lal and N.T. Rama Rao's blatant nepotism - making sons and son-in-laws Ministers, and dismissing a Cabinet wholesale without any plausible justification whatsoever.

This picture becomes clear if one looks at the Congress-I role in Karnataka and the perspective which it is pursuing. For one thing, the Congress-I

At the Hour of their Birth

Bishnu Dey

At the hour of their birth, the farmer had sickles made

and his wife silver armlets.

The road they will walk is difficult, rakhis they wear on young wrists-

In vain the devils sharpen their claws.

Look, Lalkamal wakes up even before Nilkamal does. He is ready with a single sleepless sword in hand, The red tilak flashes on his brow in the reddening dawn's light

-Who will now go to his doom?

Robbers pull masks over their faces, devils disgorge Their ill-gotten stocks, darkness swells up to the brim, Desperately, the Queen's kinsfolk, on skeletal hills, Perform pestilential service by slaughterous rites.

Meanwhile, in the grip of Lalkamal and Nilkamal Waves the red banner of life, celebrating brotherhood— Their legend fills the air. Farmers make sickles of steel.

While workers sing along in workshops.

(Translated from original Bengali by Samir Dasgupta)

has long been nurturing the rift between Deve Gowda and the Janata Dal. It is alive to the Chandra Shekhar-Hegde discord and alert enough to exploit to the full Subramaniam Swamy's operation in which naturally it has taken more than academic interest.

Secondly, the Rajiv Congress-I's target would be to topple the State Ministries run by the major Opposition parties. The Janata Dal in Karnataka came as an easy prey as it faced inner rift. The new target is likely to be the Assam Ministry run by the AGP, and the excuse — already hinted at by Rain Gandhi himself last month — would be the Bodo agitation which the Centre accused the Assam Government of having been incapable of handling while by devious ways it encourages the Bodo agitators to hit at the same Assam Government.

Simultaneously, there seems to be some probine on the part of the Congress-I to wean over the Left and avert its coming to an understanding with the National Front, and as quid pro quo, the Left-led Ministries may be spared from being

toppled.

Thirdly, there will be no inhibition in making use of the office of the Governor for such a toppline operation. In the case of Karnataka, there was apprehension that Bommai might manage to knock together a majority in the Assembly and so the Governor quite unashamedly chose to get rid of the Janata Dal Ministry. At the Central level many of the senior Cabinet Ministers were reported to have been opposed to the peremptory dismissi of the Bommai Ministry and seemed to have prefer red the trial of strength in the Assembly. According to some circles, Rajiv went by Dhawan's advice for a swift toppling operation. It may be noted that the same circles had blamed Dhawan for engineer ing the Andhra coup of 1984, which ended in fiasco. It would be idle to expect that any of the Governors today would act, or even appear to ad independently once the firman is issued by the Raji establishment.

Further, the objective for dissolving the Assemble alongwith the sacking of the Bommai Ministry is go in for a swift poll. The Congress-I calculation that the present rift within the Janata Dal woll persist and this will be facilitated objectively by moves of Chandra Shekhar and of Subramania Swamy. The idea of going for a blitz poll Karnataka is based on the assumption that Congress-I will fare well in the present circumstant and this will redeem its standing which suffered an unpreceding standing which suffered as the present circumstance and the suffered and unpreceding the suffered as the present circumstance and the suffered as the present circumstance and the suffered as the present circumstance and the suffered as th major setback in Tamil Nadu in January.

Any recovery in Karnataka by the Rajiv Congress will not only be a blow for the Janata Dal but advance warning for the dissidents within Congress-I itself. In other words, the Rajiv Games camp wants to turn Karnataka into a pilot project for the Lok Sabha elections.

Alternatively, if the Congress-I comes out poorly the Karnataka poll, then it will strengthen the of those inside the Rajiv establishment who work prefer bypassing any poll contest to retain power another Emerge another Emergency.

April 26

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Indo-Nepal Relations: A Critique

T. KARKI HUSSAIN

One is tempted to look at the present controversy in Indo-Nepal relations in a manner somewhat different from the hardline versus moderate arguments which are rampant.

To begin with, it is correct to assume that the chauvinist elements in both camps have wrested the initiative from those who are inclined to be sensible and circumspect in the matter. The latter have long upheld the view that national interests are best promoted when the interacting states find the circumstances of their coexistence as essentially self-fulfilling. Keeping in view the endemic ups and downs in Indo-Nepal relations, they have time and again counselled the reverse of pressure tactics to bring about a sense of pragmatism in bilateral relations.

Needless to say, it is the elite in power on either side which has defined the nature of responses and taken decisions, irrespective of the damage that it would inflict on the process of diplomacy, leave alone cause incalculable suffering to the people as such. The way the Indian side has sought to rationalise the severity of its stand on the Trade and Transit Treaty begs immediate attention upon the underlying impulse behind the punitive diplomacy.

It may be surmised that the decision to use the potent lever of economic relations was impromptu tather than planned in advance. This by itself sufficiently demonstrates the casual manner in which New Delhi tends to define its national interest. Once again, one is made to realise the hazards of pursuthe real lative policy on an ad-hoc basis, staking the real, long-term interests of the nation. One cannot escape from the unpleasant truth that quite a few of Indian actions have generated a feeling of insecurity among its immediate neighbours. It is unlikely that anxieties commonly shared in the legion would easily dissipate.

At a time when Indo-Nepal relations have reached uffered! an unprecedented nadir, it may be timely to question as to why Marted nadir, it may be timely to adjust to a as to why Nepal finds it inconvenient to adjust to a regional ordered finds it inconvenient to adjust to a regional order in which India has finally emerged as a dominant or in which India has finally emerged as industrially. a dominant power militarily as well as industrially. This is in view of the fact that Nepal's vital strategic and economic. and economic interests overwhelmingly lie not with china but with India. How come Nepal, instead of librium within the about the shift in power-equiiself conscionely, cregion, has opted to distance itself consciously from India? Nepal is aware that a sea change has come in India's power-structure in the sixties with come in India's power-structure from the sixties when it was humbled on its northern and was the sixties when it was humbled on its northern before and was the sixties when it was humbled on its northern than the sixties when it was humbled on its northern than the sixties when it was humbled on its northern than the sixties when it was humbled on its northern than the sixties when it was humbled on its northern than the sixties when it was humbled on its northern than the sixties when it was humbled on its northern than the sixties when it was humbled on its northern than the sixties when it was humbled on its northern than the sixties when it was humbled on its northern than the sixties when it was humbled on its northern than the sixties when it was humbled on its northern than the sixties when it was humbled on its northern than the sixties when it was humbled on its northern than the sixties when it was humbled on its northern than the sixties when it was humbled on its northern than the sixties when it was humbled on its northern than the sixties when it was humbled on its northern than the sixties when it was humbled on its northern than the sixties when it was humbled on the sixties when it was humbled on the sixties when the sixties border and was known as the case of a basket for Nepal found it international aid. Why then has Nepal found it

Can the Nepalese reaction be adjudged purely in terms of conceit and opportunism of an over-ambitious, short-sighted elite impervious to the innate realities? Where precisely lies the key to the distortions in Indo-Nepal relations? Finally, instead of striking a self-righteous posture, would it not be more helpful in the long run to identify the real cause of the drift and make a sincere attempt to correct the perspective?

Being basic to an understanding of the current impasse, these questions should no longer be ignored. Just as success makes room for complacency, failure should help in raising the level of consciousness across the spectrum. 'The crisis of confidence generated by different perceptions of needs and responses was long in the making. Centered round the notion of an unequal relationship, earlier, anti-India feelings within Nepal had remained rather muted.

A marked deterioration in the relationship with its southern neighbour is now openly attributed to Indian reluctance to allow Nepal free play in acordance with its aspirations. That it has surfaced in an extreme manner all the more necessitates an urgent review of the approach pursued so far. Whether or not Nepal's actions in the past two years have been blatantly provocative, forcing India to react harshly as it did is beside the point. This is not to say that the Nepalese insistance on work permits for Indian nationals, the import of Chinese arms and the hike in the customs duty on Indian goods are specious arguments, escalated by New Delhi to press upon a vulnerable neighbour. Matters have indeed reached a breaking point between the two governments on the above issues which are broadly recognised here as violating the very principle on which their special relationship had survived against odds so far.

As New Delhi argues, the 1950 Indo-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship, beside the common strategic and economic considerations had provided for a unique socio-cultural facility to millions of the nationals of the two neighbours in areas such as residence, employment, ownership of business, trade, property and unrestricted entry across their 1700 km. long open border. Nepal had not kept its part of the bargain when it started invoking work permits for Indians, favoured firms other than Indian on internationally funded projects, barred Indians from being employed by foreign firms operating in Nepal and put restrictions on movement of Indian difficult to link its fortune with resorgent undialitain. Forkutkenentine cupackage and concessional offers in

MAINSTREAM April 29, 1989

trade and transit flowed from the ethos of the 1950 Treaty as much as its actual functioning on the concept of mutual accommodation. This was wantonly set aside by Nepal.

Sooner than later, Kathmandu had to realise the limits of its arbitrary posturing. Apparently, a unified Trade and Transit Treaty was found expedient to drive home the linkage between one and all issues which had vitiated Indo-Nepal relations of late. India's refusal to accede to Nepal's requirement of separate treaties based on permanence of its transit rights as a land-locked country as against the fluctuating patterns of commercial transactions has reinforced the assessment of impartial observers that in its pursuit of economic diversification and strategic autonomy, Nepal has ruffled New Delhi's sensitivities.

The way the Indian government has taken exception to the induction of Chinese arms under a secret arrangement entered at the highest level in Kathmandu and Beijing also reflects its growing frustration over the widening gap in the strategic field. The multi-purpose China card has been exploited by the status-quoist forces within the Kingdom, Initially, in highlighting the importance of its giant neighbour to the North, the Nepalese leadership intended it to be used in dealing effectively with Indian preponderance. Although it has suited successive regimes in the Kingdom to imply that the way India leans on Nepal leaves it with no alternative but to rely on China, Nepal's apparent disregard of India's security concerns has been duly

In the balance of power game, projecting China as an alternative to India may not be the intention of the ruling elite. However, an explicit bias against India has worked to the detriment of normal interaction and in fact caused alienation between the two. The present rulers have romantically tinkered with the idea of a leap outward from their cis-Himalayan confines.

India's singular lack of response to Nepal's Zone of Peace (ZOP) proposal which has been endorsed by an overwhelming majority of states including immediate neighbours such as China, Pakistan and Bangladesh has further prejudiced King Birendra, the originator of the ZOP in holding India as the biggest impediment to his objectives. The Indian perception that the exercise is motivated to neutralise its position has an element of truth in Since Mahendra's time, Nepal has tried to lessen the disadvantage of its geographical situation. In that respect, the Sino-Indian rivalry has come as a blessing to the Himalayan Kingdom.

After the royal take-over, the Chinese element came handy to the beleaguered King for controlling the direction of Nepal's internal politics away from the party system and insulating it from potential Indian intervention. It also became a prized instrument to negotiate better terms of trade and aid with India as happened in 1960 although the coincidence of the political leadership being represented by the Nepali Congress ensured the politics of relative adjustment on eider sidenic Sorbsequently Kangreladients with Nepal. [(April 24)

the highway linking Lhasa with Kathmandu symbo lized a strategic gain for Nepal in underlining opening to the north as well. Its psychological value far transcended its immediate utility in the sense that Nepal need not feel claustrophobic about being India-locked. The Chinese-built highwa had till recently played a marginal role in Nepal plans for trade diversification. However, the enter of Chinese arms through the highway in the summe of 1988 and a promise of supply of petrol and other essential goods to alleviate the shortage caused by India's interrupted exports since Mard 1989 have confined India's fears about the strategy access through the highway.

India's hyper-sensitivity to Sino-Nepal proximination may be exaggerated but not entirely questional from the point of its own insecurity vis-a-vis Chin One may juxtapose the same with the Chines reaction to the Indo-Chinese developments in the 60s and 70s. At that time, being paranoid about the Soviets, China had laid down conditions which if followed would have circumscribed Vietnami own choice. After Vietnam's reunification, when the Hanoi government nationalised the Chinese controlled retail trade in the south, Beijing reacted sharply and called it as patent discrimination against the Chinese residents. Another paralle comes to the mind, that of tiny Laos feelingth brunt of Chinese hostility just because it had side Vietnam. Reportedly, the Chinese with. extended material aid to the anti-Pathet la insurgents fighting Vientiane.

Admittedly, the circumstances are not similar and the so-called mutual rigidity of India and New is not placed on a comparable scale with Chin malequation of the period with the Indo-Chi states. Now that India has moved from a vulni able position to relative security on the China for it need not be unduly alarmed about Chinese and vities in the Terai and adjacent border are However, India has a vested interest in keeping bay external influences on Nepal. In other wor the elite-perception revolving around the fulction of an Indo-centric power-structure has tended to intolerant of intra-regional non-conformism, stre thened with external support. Nehru's assumplified that India's security parameters extended upto N was not interpreted in an identical manner althou it was not questioned by the latter as long as pe prevailed between India and China. Normalisa between these two large neighbours of the witched Himalayan Kingdom may induce thinking on their shrinking options if it falls shift its titled neutrality. Interestingly, Nepal emulated India quite literally by emphasising international role. In the process, it may re India's folly of neglecting its vital, neighbor relations relations. Regional, bilateral overtures, aimed isolating India may not yield desired results.

Finally, now that Nepal has deemed it necessity to challenge the status-quo, India would benefit taking it as an opportunity to rationalise the ceptual as well as operational inadequacies of

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COMMENTARY

Afghanistan: Najibullah Fights Back

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Over a year has passed since the signing of the Geneva Accords on Afghanistan. Two days after the signing of those Accords between Afghanistan and Pakistan (with the US and the USSR standing as the international guarantors of the documents concluded) this writer had, on April 13, 1988, written

in this journal:

"It needs to be understood that whatever the magnitude and scale of fighting following the conclusion of the Geneva Accords and the pull-out of Soviet troops, Dr Najibullah and the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan would be able to withstand all pressures, pursuing as they are a mature policy of national reconciliation that has already begun to bring about a change in the mass psyche in Afghanistan. Whether the PDPA remains in government in its present form or whether a coalition government is formed in Kabul, obscurantist fundamentalists do not stand a chance of usurping power in the heart of Afghanistan. This assessment, brought by the Prime Minister's special emissary Gopi Arora after his recent trip to Kabul, is based on a realistic evaluation of the correlation of forces that is unlikely to change in the days ahead."

The recent successes scored by the Afghan Government forces in repulsing successive ferocious rebel attacks on practically all major centres along the Pak-Afghan border, and more particularly on the city of Jalalabad, have vindicated the correctness of the above assessment. In fact it was really a "realistic evaluation of the correlation of forces" in

Even after almost two and a half months of the withdrawal of the last of the 115,000 Soviet troops from that country, Dr Najibullah and his PDPA Government continue to be in power in Kabul and the boastful claim of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, the fundamentalist leader of mujahideen and recipient of the bulk of the US material aid channelised through Pakistan, of holding the next meet of the rebels' Interim government in Kabul has failed to materialise. No doubt the civil war engulfing the country after the complete Soviet pull-out has threatened to assume bloodier proportions. But the fact remains that the fundamental objectives of the Pak-based seven party tebel alliance (which has now floated the interim government) have not been fulfilled: neither has the Najibullah administration been dislodged nor have the Pak guided fundamentalists among the rebels been able to assert their authority over any region of the country is the country. If anything, the Najibullah Government has consolidated its position.

One perceptive journalist — Appan Menon of The Hindu who recently visited Kabul, gives a lucid

explanation of Dr Najibullah's capacity to survive for such a long time (about which even the Soviets had nurtured serious doubts). Noting the 'striking confidence' of the Kabul Government machinery, he writes in Frontline about the Afghan President's success in converting the Soviet withdrawal into a political asset"

Dr Najibullah, according to Menon, hammers home the same point in every speech, interview and press statement: "Now that the Russians have gone who are you fighting?" Thereafter, Menon adds: "And sometimes he (Najib) takes this question further, embellishing it with Islamic imagery. 'We were accused of following one infidel, when the Russians were here,' he says. 'Now the Russian infidel has gone, but what are the dushman (enemy) doing? They are the puppets of three infidels: Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and the United States.' In the politicoreligious demonology of the common Afghan, this has stirred powerful historical memories. It meant non-Pakhtoon domination; alien Wahabi Islamic hegemony, and memories of the centuries-old struggle for independence from White colonial rule."

Menon underlines the disunity within the mujahideen camp and contrasts it with the ability of the two (Khalq and Parcham) factions of the PDPA for the first time since the April Revolution, to "unite

to confront a common enemy"

Air Commodore Jasjit Singh, Director of the Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses, pointed out at a recent seminar on Afghanistan in New Delhi that "behind the recent events have been the long cherished perceptions, particularly by people in the United States and elsewhere, on two issues: first, that a military solution is the answer, that it is a viable answer and it will succeed very rapidly; and secondly, the assumption, which is very difficult to believe, that there are only one set of Afghan people who are brave and great fighters, and the other side perhaps are not similarly placed."

The Jalalabad battle had roused hopes in the West and Pakistan that it would be, for the mujahideen, "more or less, a walkover", the Air Com-modore noted, adding: "More than four weeks of bitter fighting, which has left over 3000 of the resistance rebel groups dead, and another 2000 injured. has not led to the fall of Jalalabad. In fact, there are no indications of any likelihood of its falling. Even the so-called offensive of Kandahar seems to

have petered out before it got launched."

The IDSA Director was thus categoric in his assertion that "all the assumptions on which this military confrontation was not only built up but (Continued on page 32)

MAINSTREAM April 29, 1989

Bhopal: After Supreme Court Verdict

DINESH MOHAN

SARKAR ne Bhopal me bhi Bofors kar diya" (the Government has done a Bofors Bhopal), "Karor-patiyo ki sarkar aur kya karegi" (what else can you expect from a pro-rich Government). These are exchanges I heard in the bazaar last evening on the Supreme Court settlement on the Bhopal disaster.

A deeply disturbing situation. For three reasons: the people no longer differentiate between the government and the judiciary, they are convinced that the Government functions for the rich only and that the corruption can be associated (even if

wrongly) with the Supreme Court.

It is now generally accepted by most people that the immediate response to the disaster of the Government, workers' unions and organised industry was as much of a disaster as the industrial disaster itself. If there were any tales of heroism they were of individuals acting in response to their conscience. If anything sustained our hopes and beliefs in the decency of our society it was the efforts of fledgeling voluntary organisations, and some journalists who doggedly pursued the interests of the disaster victims.

With time even the efforts of these organisations ground to a minimum. They had their own internal problems. They had problems with the Government, and they couldn't gather much public support. It is quite incredible that after a disaster of this magnitude no well run official or voluntary organisations have been able to establish themselves to pursue the interests of the victims on a sustained basis for the next few decades. If nothing else, this indicates the fragility and the weakness of our societal mechanisms that should otherwise be able to respond to crises almost automatically,

The most depressing aspect of these events is that they provide conclusive proof that the poor in this country have little lobbying power even when the sympathies of the ordinary people around the world are with them. Nani Palkiwala is reported to have stated: "It is a very sensible decision and it is eminently in the interest of India." Unwittingly, he has given greater credence to Sharad Joshi's

'India vs Bharat' thesis!

We don't really need any learned analyses to discover whether the US-\$ 470 million are adequate or not. The capitalist world has given us the most meaningful signal: the Union Carbide's shares jumped 10 per cent. The shareholders obviously expected the Indian Supreme Court to award a much higher amount as compensation.

The damage has been done. A US multinational company seems to have more clout in India then its own citizens. The Supreme Court has lost credibility. The Government is seen by the people as working against their best interests. Worst of all poor peple are being convinced that their lives don't matter.

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Writ petitions have already been filled in the Supreme Court to question the settlement on various grounds. This is all well and good. However, some of the basic issues are still not being discussed

These are: (a) Why is it that in such a large country like India the Government cannot work with citizens groups to mobilise a large joint effort to rehabilitate the victims of disasters immediately After all, indigenous expertise exists. For example organisations made arrangements to feet 30,000 or 40,000 victims of the 1984 violence in Delhi within a day. (b) Why don't political parties present well thought out action plans as alternatives to the inaction of the Government (c) Why have the citizens of Bhopal not been more concerned with the situation in their city? (d) Why is it that even the well-intentioned citizens groups can't get together on a sustained basis to tackt such issues and why can such groups be harassed by the authorities so easily? (e) What is lacking in our societal mechanisms that we can't take long term perspectives and long-term actions for longterm problems?

In the meantime, the following actions, if taken, would help convince the citizens of India that the Government of India has good intentions in the way

it is handling the Bhopal case.

(1) Irrespective of when the case is actually settled, interim compensations be given imme

diately to the victims in Bhopal.

(2) Arrangements be made for much more efficient health monitoring of the victims and children and treatment of their health problems. (3) A Bhopal Memorial Disaster Research Centre should be established on the premises of the Union Carbide factory in Bhopal immediately This Centre should be responsible for continuing research on the victims and their offspring 101 the foreseable future. The Centre should also be given the responsibility for maintaining life rature on disaster research and relief and for conducting research on industrial disasters.

Unless some such activities are undertaken we will have to conclude that the present socio-political climate is more conducive for promoting international formational national festivals, utsavs, multicrore exhibitions and various national celebrations rather than looking after the health of people who are victims of decisions taken by the same class of people who promote these melas. We will have to conclude that in the Indian that in the India of today it is easier to spend hundreds of crores on entertainment than

medicine and rehabilitation.

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vo Nguyen Giap: "General of Peace"

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The first-ever visit to India of 78-year old General Vo Nguyen Giap — the legendary hero of Vietnam and the real architect of the Vietnamese people's strategic victories over the French colonialist and the American imperialist aggressors - has not received adequate attention in our national press.

General Vo Nguyen Giap was from 1946 the Minister of Defence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (as North Vietnam was called after the people there had seized power in Hanoi under the leadership of Ho Chi Minh in August 1945) and Commander-in-Chief of both the Vietnam Liberation. Army and the Self-Defence Militia. In 1976, after the complete liberation of Vietnam and reunification of the country, he was elected Vice-Chairman of the Council of Ministers (Deputy Prime Minister) of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV) - a post he holds to this day - and the SRV's Minister of Defence (he retained that designation till 1980).

General Giap was the moving spirit and chief strategist behind the Vietnamese people's struggle in the historic battle of Dien Bien Phu that raged for 55 days till the French were decisively defeated on May 7, 1954, thereby changing the entire course of the war. It is striking that he visited this country, undoubtedly one of the Vietnam's closest friends in Asia, in mid-April around the time of the 35th anniversary of that battle.

While narrating the experience of the struggle culminating in the victory at Dien Bein Phu, General Giap made a brilliant analysis of the war in his article "To Arm the Revolutionary Masses, to Paild the People's Army". Excerpts from that article are worth reproducing in order to get a clearer idea of the factors behind the success of the Vietnamese struggle against foreign powers.

In the resistance against French aggression, our main force grew from small units in the beginning to a strategic mobile force composed of battlehardened mobile combat groups with continuously improving equipment, good training, high morale and great fighting power.... The Dien Bien Phu battle showed the very advanced stage of development reached by our stategic mobile forces in the resistance war against French aggression. While our army and people were winning. were winning great victories in many aspects, our crack making great victories in many aspects, our crack mobile combat groups on the Dien Bien Phu battlefront battlefront, reinforced by technical units and with the strong support of the entire people, wiped out the biggest enemy stronghold in Indo-China...

The development of the people's armed forces to three contents of the people's armed forces and into three categories of forces, the regular forces and regional forces of forces, the regular joint and guerilla forces forming the people's army, the militia and guerilla forces being the people's army, the masses, show there is being the armed forces of the masses, show that our military organisation during people's under the people of the peopl the people's war against French colonialist aggression was an organisation of the people.... sion was an organisation of the entire people...

The aggressors had to deal not only with the

revolutionary army but also with an entire people who had risen up to join their revolutionary armed forces in a resolute resistance in all fields. aggressor troops were submerged in the ocean of people's war. They faced a war without a frontline and without rear, with a battlefront which was nowhere and everywhere....

"This was the first victory for a national liberation war in a colonial country. It proves that in our era, a small nation with no vast territory and no large population and no developed economy, is quite capable of waging a revolutionary war to defeat an old-type colonialist war of aggression." (Vo Nguyen Giap-Selected Writings; Hanoi, 1977, pp. 406-411).

The experience of that struggle helped the Vietnamese people withstand the savage onslaughts of the US aggressors in the subsequent period. In that struggle too General Giap's military leadership proved to be invaluable. Using the same strategic concept of combining guerilla war with conventional war, the Vietnamese people achieved their remarkable victory through liberation of the whole country by the end of April 1975.

General Giap came to this country today under totally different conditions. As Deputy Prime Minister he is currently supervising the efforts of Vietnam at national regeneration in the sphere of science and technology in particular. In these efforts cooperation with India (in science and technology and various fields of economic development) is of crucial importance. General Giap's talks and exchanges of views here were intended to give a further boost to Indo-Vietnamese economic ties.

On the political front, he apprised the Indian leaders of the import of Vietnam's unilateral decision to complete its troops withdrawals from Kampuchea by September this yar. General Giap is convinced that peace will be maintained after the pull-out. But he lays emphasis on the formation of an International Control Commission for Kampuchea with India as chairman and Poland; Canada and Indonesia as members (on the lines of the 1954 International Control Commission on Cambodia that oversaw the withdrawal of Vietnamese volunteers from that country).

The old war-horse looked tired, but he retains the same agility and charm of yester years. And his infectious smile radiates the same confidence with which he had charted out the strategy of the battle of Dien Bien Phu in 1954. Age has only added a new, lasting dimension to the legend associated with his name.

"I am the General of peace, peace in honour, peace in independence and freedom," General Giap said in an exclusive interview to this correspondent in his hotel in New Delhi on April 16.

people conducted against the French and the US for freedom. The source of strength of the Vietnamese, he explained, was simple: "We rely on the people: the whole nation united".

He made a special mention of the strong bonds of friendship and cooperation between India and Vietnam; highlighted the efforts being made by Vietnam to mend fences with China; and underscored the importance of the close Soviet-Vietnamese

ties.

Following is the full text of the interview:

Ques: What were the most striking features of the Vietnamese people's armed struggle against French colonialism and US imperialism in which you, sir, played one of the most crucial roles? What are the major lessons to be drawn from this struggle for the benefit of the newly emerging countries?

VNG: What was the most important thing in our war of resistance against foreign aggressions? I can just summarise what President Ho Chi Minh said: "Nothing is more precious than independence and the spirit to be the master of one's destiny." This spirit we inculcated a long time ago in our history. Therefore, when our country was facing the danger of being invaded in the contemporary period everybody followed the appeal of President Ho Chi Minh.

We would rather sacrifice everything than being invaded and being enslaved. Therefore, everybody

took up the cause in right earnest.

We have accumulated vast experience in our struggle: the policy of our Party: the military science and technique of the people's war; the support we received from the international community, from the Soviet Union, from China; the sympathy and support from our other friends in the world including the Indian people. But if we put it in a nutshell: we rely on the people. That is the strength of the entire nation: the whole nation united; if we are not united then we face difficulties.

In the present situation in the world today to maintain world peace is our primary task. That is, preserving peace in the world. We would like to say that Vietnam had been struggling for the past several decades. We had been struggling for decades in order to bring about peace on our land, and that kind of peace which must be closely related to independence and freedom. Today and in the future too, the peoples of nations in the world should unite with each other to struggle for lasting peace on our planet, to fight against the danger of a nuclear war and to fight against other schemes of war.

Peace must always be linked to national independence; to development in political, economic and social fields of all nations in the world. That's how we understand peace. This significance of peace is based on our common understanding, that is, the Indian people too understand it the same way.

Ques: To what particular battle in this struggle would you attach maximum importance and why?

VNG: We went through at first the political struggle and then the military struggle. There were three main events: first, the general insurrection in August 1945 that led to the coming into being of

He spoke at length on the battles the Vietnamese the Democratic Garageriblic of Vietnam (DRV). This demonstrated that if the people, united with each other, rose up in patriotic struggle, they could win great victories.

The second major event was the victory of Dien Bien Phu. This showed for the first time that a young army of a poor nation could defeat the modern army of a great power of the West. This led to the liberation of the northern part of Vietnam made a deep impact on the international situation and encouraged other nations to rise up.

The third major event was the great victory in the spring of 1975 wholly librating our country. If we had time we could talk a lot about these battles.

Ques: What are the prospects of lasting peace in Indo-China?

VNG: You ask me about the prospects of peace in our part of the world - Indo-China and South-Fast Asia in general. I can assure you that the prospects

Why? Because the Vietnamese people, the people of Laos and the Kampuchean people all desire

In September this year we will withdraw all our forces from Kampuchea. I would like to recall that this is the third time we sent our troops to Kampuchea. The first time we went there to help the Kampuchean people in the struggle against the French colonialists. When the Geneva agreement was signed we pulled back our forces.

The second time we sent our forces there to help them fight US aggression and once the Americans

were defeated we withdrew our forces.

This time we went there to help the administration of the People's Republic of Kampuchea to fight against the genocidal danger of the Pol Pot clique. Now that the Kampuchean people have established themselves, developed and become masters of their own destiny - we feel that our duties towards them have been fulfilled. So the withdrawal of our forces from Kampuchea has created favourable conditions for peace and stability in South-East Asia and think for large areas of South Asia too.

This is a just policy pursued by Vietnam. This shows that we always respect the independence and sovereignty of others. That's why this act of Vietnam has been warmly, widely welcomed by peoples of different countries. We wish and hope that India, as in the past, will contribute to the trend of peace and stability in this part of the world in South-East

Ques: How do you evaluate the present Chinese role vis-a-vis the Kampuchean problem?

VNG: I would like to say that the Chinese people and the Vietnamese people have a tradition friendship which is longstanding and age-old, against imperialism.

The Government and people of China supported and assisted us in the past in our struggle against colonialists and thereafter against the French American aggression. We are very grateful to them.

On the other hand, we hope that in the coming period the relations between our two countries will be normalised as soon as possible. That is aspiration have as possible two aspiration because it is in the interest of our 100

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peoples. The traditional friendship are strong because that the tradition of the peoples of Vietnam and

Naturally there are problems in relations between the two countries but these are only some dark clouds in the blue sky of friendship. We believe that these clouds will disappear. I hope that the mass media and journalists would help in reflecting what I said, that is, in respect of the aspirations of peace and friendship of the Vietnamese people.

In particular conditions the Vietnamese people did never forget the assistance of the Chinese people

in the past two recent wars.

What is the Chinese role in the Kampuchean problem? Why don't you ask that question to the Chinese leaders? I can only add that they have been saying that they want a peaceful, political solution of the problem.

Ques: This is what they have been saying now? VNG: Well, they have been publicly saying so for

long.

Ques: How significant are Gorbachev's policies in the international field from the standpoint of

Vietnam's national interests?

VNG: As far as relations between the Soviet Union and Vietnam are concerned, these relations are very good. The Soviet Union has helped us a great deal. On the question of consolidation and defence of peace in the world we fully agree with the Soviet policy. I think the Soviet Union also agrees with us that peace must always go alongwith national independence and social development of all nations in the world.

I think the Soviet leaders always respect the independence of other countries. I did not want to comment on the policies of Comrade Gorbachev when he is not here. But in my opinion Comrade Gorbachev advocates both peace and national independence

for all countries.

Ques: How do you assess the growing relations, both political and economic, between India and Vietnam? Are you hopeful that your mission to India would give a further boost to Indo-Vietnamese cooperation?

VNG: My visit to India here is at the invitation of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. I am very thankful

Friendship between Vietnam and India dates back to antiquity. In recent times it has been growing since the period of Ho Chi Minh and the father of James period of Ho Chi Minh and the father of Jawaharlal Nehru as well as Jawaharlal Nehru. But much before that in history, Indian culture came to the before that in history, Indian culture Came to Vietnam always in conditions of peace.

These relations have been longstanding in history. Our leaders, Madame Indira Gandhi in particular, helped the process of strengthening of relations.

Recently to Vietnam and Recently the visits of Rajiv Gandhi to Vietnam and Nguyen Van Linh to India have deepend and reinforced that Linh to India have deepend and reinforced that forced the bonds of friendship between the two

In the present situation obtaining in the world today the bonds of friendship and cooperation between Indiana of friendship and cooperation between India and Vietnam in many fields are a factor which contributes to peace and stability in South East Asia Moreover, as

Digitized by Arya Samai Foundation Chepnal and eGangotrions in the interests of the peoples. And I believe that the prospects of restoring ship with other nations in the interests of the readitional friendship are strong because that happiness of our restoring the contraction of the peoples. interests of peace and independence of other nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America and other parts of the world.

> I think that this friendship has a basis for further development especially when the relations between the Soviet Union and India are developing in a fine

> Recently the relations between India and China have undergone a new change and development. Now we see a strengthening of the bonds of friendship among nations not only in our respective regions but also in the region of the Asia-Pacific and the world at large.

> We highly value India's friendship with us and we are sure that this friendship will continue to develop

forever in the interest of our two peoples.

The cooperation between India and Vietnam is all-sided. In the economic field we have cooperation in many areas, especially in the sphere of oil and gas. In economic relations the cooperation is closely related to scientific cooperation. We are both friendly, developing countries situated in the tropical region. We, the Vietnamese, can learn a lot from the scientific achievements of India.

I came here and held fruitful discussions with the Indian leaders on closer cooperation between our two countries. I came to leafn a lot about the development of India brought about by many Indian scientisis and economic managers. I hope that my visit will make a humble contribution towards further strengthening of cooperation between our two countries.

Ques: The economic problems that Vietnam is facing today are, I think, not only due to the mistakes you committed in the field of economic management but also because of the huge army that Vietnam is forced to maintain. Are you thinking of taking steps to reduce the army and thus lighten the heavy burden on the national exchequer?

VNG: We will reduce our army. But how and to what extent it will be reduced I cannot say just However, we will reduce our army in such a way that our army and people are able to defend our independence and sovereignty in peace as well as in all eventualities.

Ques: What are the general impressions you are carrying with you after your meetings with the Indian leaders?

VNG: We have had very good talks with the Indian leaders here. Vietnam and India are friends. We have common objectives: every person must be free, every nation must be independent. We had set these objectives before us a long time back. Both of us greatly cherish - and more than anything else what the Vietnamese people cherish most is—peace.

I am the General of peace, peace in honour, peace in independence and freedom. That's why I came here and met our loyal friends.

South East Asia and South Asia. Moreover, as of them I met for the first time. But when I members of the NAM, Vietnam and India binder with the name of the NAM, Vietnam and India binder with the name of the NAM, Vietnam and India binder with the name of the NAM, Vietnam and India binder with the name of t

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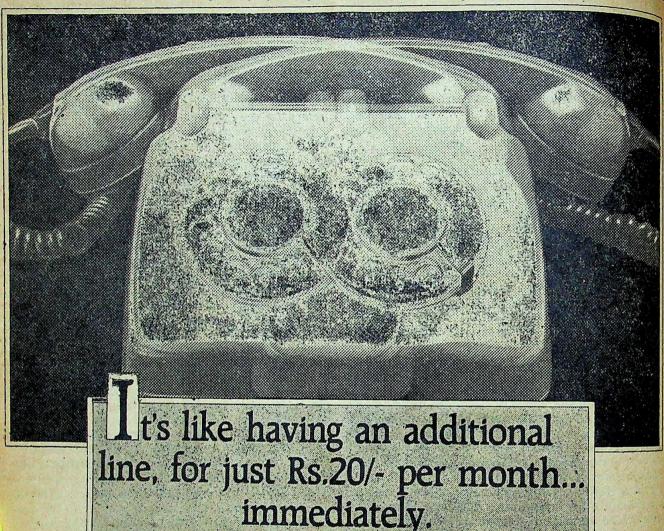
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The sign of any living thing lies in its capacity to grow and change. The moment its growth is stopped it is dead. Jawaharlal Nehru

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CHARLIE CHAPLIN: A CENTENARY TRIBUTE

The Birds Will Sing Tomorrow's

MRINAL SEN

"Would you mention three names you consider the best among film-makers?"

Such a question or one similar to this, much too hackneyed an inquiry which hardly deserves any attention, was alledly put to Jean Renoir. The French master allegedly counted his fingers and said: "Charlot, Charlot and Charlot."

Charlot, as everybody knows, is Charlie — Charles Chaplin, who, had he been still alive, would have

completed 100 years an April 16, 1989.

What a delicious tribute reported to have come from one of the greatest among filmmakers the world has ever known. And how disarmingly simple

and delightfully Chaplinesque!

I saw the man only once, just once and never after. I saw him on September 3, 1972, quietly appearing on the stage of St. Marco's famous opera house La Fenice. It was the last day of the 33rd International Film Festival at Venice where, among half a dozen sections or more, was a comprehensive retrospective of his works. A fabulous event, and, indeed, a tremendous success: II Tutto Chaplin.

On September 3, all the boats to St. Marco were full, and there were many more private boats leading to St. Marco. The house of opera, as a result, was Jam-packed. I was one of the fortunate few -"awardwinners", so to say, sharing the same ancient stage where the great legend was made to walk in, heavily aided by two swell officials. Shockingly for me and for others too who watched him for two consecutive weeks, it was difficult to recognise him as his "conception of the average man, of almost any man, of myself". There was no derby "striving for dignity." dignity", no moustache to project "vanity", no tightbuttoned coat and the stick and his whole manner to suggest "a gesture towards gallantry and dash and

He was just there in the middle of the stage, flanked by the two officials, seized with infirmity, skin parched. That was a day, an evening. I shall never formed to feet.

At Lide the day of days, a big day, jour de fete. At Lido, the venue of the Venice Film Festival, for two weeks I saw Chaplin on the screen, "a fallen aristocrat at grips with poverty", one who had known humiliation, and known that "humiliation is thing you contain the screen, the had had had a thing you contain the screen, the screen screen, the screen screen, the screen screen, the screen scre a thing you cannot forget". For two weeks I saw him walking into an unending journey, from one film to anoth film to another, embracing a large variety of funny adventures, trying to "meet the world bravely to put at bluff", but always "buffeted by life", laughing at himself ", but always "buffeted by life", laughing process, preserving himself a little", and, in the process, preserving small treasures of life such as human companies small treasures out towards a human compassion, and then walking out towards a glowing horizon, and then walking out towards, lowing horizon, and then walking our control of the desired in the Great Quixotic, as it were. Except, however, in The Great

Director, when, instead of having him and his girl friend disappear over the horizon off to a promised land against the glowing sunset, he, the Jew barber with a mistaken identity, made an impassioned appeal to the people of the world to use their power which they had in abundant measure "to create happiness, to make life free and beautiful, to make life a wonderful adventure"

For two weeks I spent almost the whole of my time discovering in Chaplin a stupendous journey, a journey through terrible decades, through social injustices and political treachery, a journey in search of human kindness. What I found striking was that here, in him, I saw a man who, without undergoing any organised political schooling in the conventional sense of the term, had responded splendidly to his times - all through experiences, through confrontations, through humiliations he had known.

As is quite evident in his films, such responses had always been immediate and spontaneous. In 1918, in Sholder Arms, an unnamed soldier of the Allied Forces arrested the Kaiser amidst a truckload of laughter and fun, and brought the captive to the nearest Allied camp. Instantly appeared on the screen a line: "And peace to the world". From such studied naivete, slowly but steadily, Chaplin attained Shavian heights when, in a more complex world with constant threats of mass-killings raising their ugly heads, the condemned Monsieur Verdoux, charged with 12 killings and sentenced to guillotine, quietly said: "War, conflict - it is all businss. One murder makes a villain, millions a hero. Numbers sanctify." Numbers sanctify!

People laughed as they had always done. But a few did not. And Chaplin knew it very well. He knew it so well that, way back in mid-thirties, pressed by time, he declared in no uncertain terms that "in the new film(s), he (the fallen aristocrat at grips with poverty) will not be quite so nice". He said: "I am sharpening the edge of his character so that people who have liked him vaguely will

have to make up their minds."

Knowing myself and my time as I do, I made up my mind. I was one of those who loved the character and laughed. During that non-stop two-week Venetian session, I laughed and thought and grew. Growing, I made sure that the Jew barber in The Great Dictator and Monsieur Verdoux were no departures from his "conception of the average man" but just its logical extension - extension growing out of an acute sense of urgency.

Thus, having watched Chaplin walking a very long way, from 1916 to 1966, all on the wide screen at Lido's festival theatre, I saw the man at St.

Marco's La Fenice confronting a solid mass of to live. people of the world, all squeezed inside that ancient opera house. The people went wild. Amidst tumultous applause, the man who had mimed so much and later spoken so much, stood still. For five minutes or more, the enthralled crowd lived in ecstasy. Then, just before the curtain was drawn, he managed to throw a few kisses, perhaps with an effort. As the curtain fell soon after, he dropped into a chair, all exhausted. I, standing behind him, could immediately see he would not live long enough to give the world any more gifts.

Rene Clair, the doyen of the French cinema, saw more or less the same thing when, in October the following year, my wife and I had the honour of being invited to a quiet lunch at Teheran. On his way to the Iranian capital, Clair made a short detour along with his wife to see Chaplin and his family at their Swiss home. "He is getting bad

to worse," he told us

Yet, exactly a year later, in October 1974, while in London to release a new book, My Life in Pictures, he said he would never be able to retire "because ideas just keep popping into my head"...

Yes, indeed, ideas kept continuously popping into his head. An irresistible urge to make yet another film made him sit up and make notes. He named

it The Freuk.

With The Freak in his head, he went to London once again in 1975 to receive his knighthood from the Queen. As he was coming out of the palace, he asked the television cameramen "not to shoot the now laborious process of climbing into his

With The Freak in his head, he was reported to have said in 1976: "To work is to live. And I love

Ideas kept popping still. But man proposes, disposes. The very next year he died peacefully in his sleep. It was December 25 — the day when long, long ago Christ was born.

As Chaplin desired, the funeral was an uncere. monious ceremony. He was quietly buried in a quieter cemetery. Two months later, the body with the coffin was found to have eclipsed from the grave, Followed a frantic search. The body and the coffin was finally unearthed 20 kilometres away, near Lake Geneva, in a cornfield. While the body was buried in the cemetery for the second time, the kidnappers, two of them, were sentenced by the court of law for "disturbing the peace of the dead"

Twenty kilometres away, the farmer and the owner of the cornfietd erected a simple wooden cross and, perhaps to make Chaplin's presence felt, put a

cane on the cross, in memory.

Since queer ideas always kept popping into his head, nobody can guess what Chaplin would have done had he been given a chance to make a film on the events following the theft of his body. I, for one, only wish I were the farmer and the owner of the cornfield where the body was kept hidden by the kidnappers. Sure enough, I would have done what the farmer did. But, being a farmer and the protector of my crop, I would have loved to plant a scarecrow at the top of the cross, of course, in memory, but also with vengeance - the kind of vengeance which, enriched by Chaplin's incredible taste for "inspired nonsense", he bore against the enemy of the people.

Then, borrowing one of his lines, I would have got the same written on the cross: "The birds will sing tomorrow". (Courtesy: The Statesman)

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Hazards of Work in Informal Sector

ANJALI DESHPANDE

It has been over six months since Shramshakti, the report of the National Commission of Self-Employed Women and Women in the Informal Sector, was presented to the Prime Minister. News about its recommendations having been accepted or otherwise is yet to come. Nevertheless, Shramshakti does not lose in significance just because the powers that be find it inconvenient to accept recommendations of far-reaching implications for over 90 per cent of women of this country, doing that kind of work which is not regarded as work at all.

Shramshakti reads like a staggering list of invisible occupations that the poorest of the poor women are engaged in, that comprise what is known as the Informal Sector. This 365 page volume brings into focus 'that type of work' that nobody seems to notice but everybody takes for granted. Work which is not covered by law or covered inadequately. Its health hazards, its economic exploitation, its social problems, and its representation or non-representation in the media. And the impact of sarkari development policies and programmes, and the advent of technology on work without which poor women would not survive and yet which enables them to barely

Set up by the Department of Women and Child Development in the Union Ministry of Human Resource Development on January 5, 1987, the Commission produced its report hardly a year and a half later in June 1988. Chaired by Ela Bhatt, the six-member Commission had Amareity Desai, Tham-Tajakshi, Mrinal Pande, Jaya Arunachalam and Vina Mazumdar as the other five members. Vina Mazumdar soon resigned protesting against the nonstatutory status of the Commission. However, she did head one of the five task forces set up by the Commission to deal with five sectors: impact of macro polices; legislative protection; health aspects; communication network systems; and workers.

Originally the Commission was intended to examine the status of self employed women with special teference to their employment, health, education and social status of self employment, health, education and social status. But the Commission realised that either widened or the 'self-employed' would have to be widened or the terms of reference should include all such women who are not technically self-employed yet suffered the are not technically self-employed yet suffered who are not technically sen chip traders for the worst at the hand of contractors, traders, forest authorities, and even the welfare departments of the Government. Eventually the Commission scored a point when the Ministry was persuaded to amend the terms of reference to include unprotestation and the terms of reference to include unprotected women labour in the country and

extend to women in the informal sector", in the ambit of the Commission's work.

The Commission began with the premise that all women are workers. Says Shramshakti: "The definitions of 'work' and 'production' as they exist today, whether in the census or in other surveys on work, are such that subsistence production and services provided by women are either ignored or taken into account only marginally. Consequently, the results of these surveys tend to reinforce the traditionally held view that women, more often than not, are non-workers whose primary responsibilities are household work and caring for children. This, as any rational person would admit, is at total variance

with the prevailing situation.'

Their household work is also recognised by the Commission as functions of vital social and economic importance, since they impart basic skills and information to the future workforce of the country. It is from this premise that its most significant and also the most controversial recommendation stems. It says: "Even when they are not employed, they are involved in socially productive and reproductive labour all of which is absolutely necessary for the survival of society. Women's work as home-makers must be recognised as social/economic production. For, when women fetch water, gather fuel and fodder or tutor their children, they are performing services in the absence of which market services would have to be purchased. Only if this is recognised, can other consequences flow from it such as a broader definition of women's work."

The Commission goes on to recommend: "The National Commission recommends that all subsequent data collection efforts should enlarge the definition of women workers to include all such activities, paid and unpaid, performed within the home or outside as an employee or on own account.'

Some women's groups, particularly those affiliated to the Left parties, have expressed serious reservations on this count. They apprehend that such a recommendation, if accepted, may mean computing the economic value of nousehold work, which would be added to the GNP to bloat it and thus present a mis-

leadingly happy picture of the economy.

The lucidly written report is interspersed with telling examples of women workers engaged in myriad jobs. Through its pages women tucked away in remote corners of the country speak out, simply and directly, about the nature of their work, their social environs, their needs, their sense of despair and occasionally of hope, of determination. The overall picture that emerges from the report is one

MAINSTREAM April 29, 1989

of terrible disregard for women and their work, that the government, the private employers, cooperatives and even the trade unions display. It brings to the fore the fact that these women are unprotected by law: and even where a law exists, it is violated not just by private employers, but even by the government itself. The Commission notes that nowhere, not even in any government agency, women in the unorganised sector are paid equal wages for equal work. The few 'dismal' exceptions to this rule were found only in Himachal Pradesh.

Most women workers are in the unprotected, self-employed and unorganised sector, managing somehow to eke out a living. The average per women earning in organised sector in 1981 came to Rs 963 per month whereas the woman in the unorganised sector earned, on the average, Rs 227 per month. And there is no gainsaying the fact that the woman in unorganised sector earned half the amount that her male counterpart did. "The earnings of selfemployed females are still more depressed," notes

the Commission.

The unemployment rate of females is much higher than that of males, both in rural as well as urban areas. According to daily status, 8.8 per cent of women in the rural areas and 10.9 per cent of women in the urban areas stand unemployed compared to 7.52 per cent and 9.23 per cent of men respectively. No wonder that the female participation rate in the labour force does not exceed 30 per

Although modernisation has added to the variety of occupations that women take up, they remain basically in the unskilled sector. Skills among women are limited to traditional occupations like spinning, weaving, tailoring, book binding, bidi-making, basketmaking and pottery. Modernisation has also not affected strict division of labour along gender lines in any way. And the trend of women shifting out of an industry in direct proportion to its mechanisation continues.

The Commission has listed some major occupations of women and given a sketch of the work involved and the conditions in which they have to function. For instance, women's contribution to dairying involves collecting fodder, milching, cleaning and washing and caring of animals. "Not only they are the last to go to bed but they are the first to rise as early as around 2.30 AM for preparing animals for milching. Yet they hardly have any say in owning the animals, or the cash income obtained from the sale of milk," notes the Commission. Some dairy cooperatives of women have proved successful. Despite this women are rarely made members of cooperatives.

And dairying work done by landless women brings with it some acute difficulties. In Nainital district a poor woman told the Commission that of the Rs 18 she earned from the sale of milk, she had to spend Rs 15 on buying fodder because she does not have enough time to go collect it. Government loans are highly unrealistic. A Scheduled Caste woman in Bihar, Karunaden, bought a cow with an IRDP loan. It gives her four litres of milk a day. She sells three litres to the local trader and earns Rs 300

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennal and eGangotri Rs 100 on buying fodder and their work, that a month. She spends Rs 100 on buying fodder and Rs 200 paying her repayment instalment. Karuna den's cynical comment is: "Dung is the only source of income from this cow."

Similarly the modern, export-oriented, highly pub licised food processing industry has brought some seasonal home-based and extremely low-waged work

The Commission has dealt with forestry, agriculture, mining, animal husbandry, fisheries, construction work, garment-making and domestic services and numerous other occupations in great detail

taking all related factors into account.

The beauty of Shramshakti as well as its strength lies in making not sketchy and general recommendations, but concrete and detailed ones on almost every conceivable aspect of women's work. The recommendations made in the ninth and final chanters covers full 64 pages. It begins with general recommendations of definition of work, and on enlarging the area of work for women and goes on to specific occupations suggesting specific measures. It has suggested more detailed research into health problems of poor labouring women. On equal remuneration, it has recommended that broad-banding of similar work be incorporated in in the law so that the tendency to classify women's work as slightly inferior in order to rationalise lower wages may be curbed. Legal literacy of women has been strongly advocated.

However, some of the perceptions of the Commission can be questioned as being of a utopian nature. In its proposals on political and social will, the Commission notes in its final recommendation. "There is another type of gap which is existing between women with resources and women without resources. Women who have skills of education, knowledge, and leadership, and are entrepreneurs and professionals, should assist their impoverished sisters in articulating their demands, bring men into greater visibility, and help them to resist exploitation and to rise above the present status of poverty and deprivation. It is only when women can get togethed as a homogeneous group, irrespective of caste, class community and activity differences, will their collective voice be heard and yield results." hope but unrealistic. Differences in class can neither be ignored nor wished away for they involve a class

of interests.

Nevertheless, there are apprehensions that the Commission's recommendations may lead to all artificial bloating of the GNP and strengthening of the informal sector instead of assimilating more women in the organised sector. The latter fear rists from the Commission? from the Commission's recommendations on employment notices ment policies and programmes. It says: "The strates should aim at ensuring them fuel, fodder and water for meeting them fuel, fodder and water for meeting their basic requirements; streps thening their existing employment by providing appropriate support in the areas of skill, training credit and marketing; protecting their employment in sectors where it is declining due to technological advancements; creating new employment opportunities for them leadly to the design of them leadly to the design of nities for them locally based for the production (Continued on page 16)

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significance of March 26 Elections

K. SUBRAHMANYAM

In the hotel Minsk in Moscow there was a polling booth for the March 26 elections. On the columns of the hotel there were two sets of posters with the pictures of Boris Yeltsin, the maverick Moscow leader, and his opponent, the officially sponsored candidate. While one could hear Yeltsin's name being mentioned in almost every Russian's conversation and most of the Russians one met told one voluntarily that they had voted for him, nothing on the streets or in the radio and television programmes indicated the excitement an Indian would expect if such a candidate was to beat the officially sponsored one by a margin of nine to one in an electorate with six million voters. Everything was deceptively orderly and quiet. But for days on end after the event no Russian would talk of anything except the elections and perestroika.

Every aspect of it was dissected and everybody including Gorbachev, Yeltsin, the Party, the opponents as well as the supporters of reform were criticised. No one waited for you to raise the question. They collared you and started to enlighten you about what was right and what was wrong about everything and everybody in the Soviet Union. One could not meet two Russians at the same time without their violently disagreeing on some aspect or the other of the election process and the reform programme. There is overwhelmingly widespread respect and affection for the man who unleashed this process but Mikhail Gorbachev himself is not spared criticism. The Soviet Union is still not a democracy in the sense we Indions would interpret it but the Soviet people have clearly demonstrated that they have an essentially democratic temperament.

Reserved Seats

The electoral process in the Soviet Union is far from democratic. The Communist Party reserved to itself one hundred seats and nominated most of and academic institutions had in addition reserved the light of the fact that many senior leaders who the reservation of seats — though for a small the eyes of many Soviet citizens. However, the innovation — the negative vote. Even in constituencies where the party apparatchik managed to the had no rival candidate or only a

The author is a former Director of the Institute recently visited the USSR.

weak one the majority of the electorate could cast their votes against him and thus prevent him from getting elected. The new Soviet electoral law prescribes that even in constituencies where there was only one candidate or two candidates a successful candidate must poll more than 50 per cent of the votes and if the electorate casts a sufficient percentage of votes against him to prevent him from getting 50 per cent, not only is he not elected but he is disqualified to stand as a candidate for the subsequent run off election which is held within a few weeks. This device has been used by the Soviet electorate to prevent prestigious and powerful men from getting elected in some 200 constituencies where there were only one or two choices.

Negative Voting

In this country only one politician, Krishan Kant, has been urging negative voting to rid our political system of corrupt politicians and to make the election process more participative and democratic. At present a certain percentage of the electorate gets disgusted with the choices in candidates offered and stays away from election. If they came to the polling booth and scratched out the names of one or more candidates that vote will be rejected as invalid and not counted as a vote against the candidate. In the present system of electing the person first past the post, a candidate could get elected even if he polled only 25 to 30 per cent of the votes polled. If people had the right to vote against a candidate most corrupt politicians would get voted out because though they may be able to purchase the largest single minority bloc of votes, the majority would in many cases vote against them and thus disqualify them. Gorbachev has effectively used this device to get a number of powerful party men who were not in favour of his reform programme eliminated.

The Soviet Union is today in a ferment, carrying out reform and restructuring, correcting some basic misconceptions of traditionalist Marxism-Leninism which had led to stagnation.

Accountability

Marxism-Leninism in practice was Stalinism since Stalin moulded the principles and processes of Soviet society in its formative stage and also longer than anyone else. Dictatorship of the proletariat meant total lack of accountability of party nomenclatura to the people at large or any other organisation. Egalitarianism led to a small, excessively privileged party elite and a total lack of incentives and disincentives for the bulk of the population which, combined with a sense of security, led to a

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the USSR is to be successful in a highly competitive and increasingly integrating international system it

has to carry out a new, peaceful revolution.

It is now realised, as was in Deng's China, that without incentives and disincentives built into the system there will be no increase in productivity and the economy will not be able to get out of its perennial shortages of consumer goods and the woeful inadequacies of the services sector. The Soviet Union is negotiating deals with foreign capital which will enable foreign companies to have total managerial control and untrammelled powers of hiring and firing along with incentives for higher productivity for workers. The aim is to spread these practices from joint and foreign ventures to Soviet enterprises. Trade unions are not expected to create problems at this reversal of long-established procedures. Indeed their cooperation is taken for granted. One Soviet intellectual went so far as to say that a certain amount of unemployment and increased mobility of labour will have to be accepted if the Soviet production system is to become competitive. As many as 198 joint ventures involving foreign capital have already been signed and a consortium of major US companies is to invest as much as \$ 10 billion in 25 ventures. asked whether all these developments did not amount to large scale reversal of the accepted wisdom on Marxism-Leninism the answer from a number of Soviet intellectuals was that today nothing was considered to be beyond questioning and reappraisal. Not only is Stalin being repudiated, even Lenin and Marx are being critically examined by the younger generation. Some of the young feel that the Bolshevik revolution was no more than a coup d'etat by the Communist Party. This, of course, is an extreme view. But nonetheless it is openly expressed.

Disappointment

Some Soviet intellectuals have expressed disappointment at the reaction of the Leftist parties of the developing world to the reformist upsurge in the Soviet Union saying these parties are unable to understand that peaceful coexistence has become an absolute necessity in the nuclear weapons era and excessive emphasis on ideology in foreign policy carries the risk of threatening world peace. The Soviet people are tired of helping other nations at their own expense as has happened in the last four decades. They now want to borrow technology and resources from the rest of the world to improve the quality of their own life. An analyst specialising on Latin America felt that these changes in the Soviet Union and China could trigger off extreme forms of ultra-Leftism in the developing world and cited Pol Pot, the Shining Path move-ment in Peru, the JVP in Sri Lanka and Naxalites in India as examples. It is obvious that these criticisms had Fidel Castro in mind.

Gorbachev succeeds or fails, what Whether happens in the Soviet Union is bound to have a profound impact on the international system just as the Bolshevik revolution had. People in the outside world will have to react to the new thinking. It is bound to disorient many of those steeped inkul Kacce of the selection of the selectio traditionist dogmas. Even among those favouring

reforms in the Soviet Union there is no consensus progressive decline in productivity. Seventy years reforms in the Soviet Union there is no consensus after the revolution the Soviet efficiency and realistic directions and areas there should be. directions and areas there should be.

A number of reformists still treat the Communist Party as an institution entitled to respect and Party as an institution change and veneration and are saddened at Yeltsin's victory not because they prefer his opponent to him but because his victory has to some extent humiliated the Party. Similarly the Party reserving 100 seats for itself in the Congress was not questioned but what was whether all those included in the list deserved to be on it. Also not all those engaged in vigorous debate on perestroika were prepared to think through and answer the question whether Gorbachev would prove to be to Marxism-Leninism what Martin Luther was to the Christian church though some were prepared to admit that possi-bility. There is a school of thought, reflected in Lev Loseff's article (International Herald Tribune April 1-2, 1989), that Gorbachev's reforms constitute a reversion to the Slavophile dream. This view is not accepted in the Soviet intellectual circles I came across. However the Pamyats, the Russian nationalists, are strong supporters of Gorbachev and

Perhaps it is too early to pass a final verdict on Gorbachev and his reforms. He appears to be more a philosopher-statesman in search of solutions for national and international problems than a political prophet with readymade blueprints for his peaceful revolution. Within the last four years he has shifted his ground significantly and has shown the necessary resilience to survive as a leader. The elections have significantly strengthened his position and may lead to acceleration in the pace of reforms. March 26, 1989, the day the Soviet Union held its first contested elections after the Communists came to power, may go down in history as having as much revolutionary significance as the day the warship Aurora fired its gun to signal the start of the Bolshevik revolution. The Hindustan Times).

Anjali: Women's World

(Contd. from page 14)

mass consumption goods; and protecting women workers from casualisation and contractualisation which lead to their exploitation. To meet these objectives, the first step will be to formulate a set of macro policies in various areas which are well into

grated with each other."

The fear about the Commission's recommendation lending credence to the consolidation of the information sector is slightly misplaced since it specifically suggests protection of women's jobs where mechanisation is best in the same of sation is having an adverse impact, like mining and the textile industry. On this count the Commission has shown a sense of realism and aimed at amelion of the condition tion of the condition of women workers, whicherd field they may be engaged in. To recommend transformation transformation of the informal sector into organised sector the informal sector into the informa organised sector, though more desirable, would have had much less practical value.

The Commission has done a commendable job as sibilising woman's way to visibilising women's work. And the only draw regarding the report is the slim chance of its being acceptual cha

its favour as a strong pressure group.

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Gandhi, Gorbachev and India Today

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This is a pamphlet written by the veteran CPI leader and Marxist ideologue S.G. Sardesai. It is being serialised in Mainstream from this issue in view of its relevance and significance. Besides the preface, it is divided into 15 sections whose titles are as follows:

I. Unique Phenomenon; II. Logic in Inconsistency; III. Who influences Whom?; IV. Convergence and its Historic Importance; V. Values and Social Norms; VI. Universal Human Values; VII. Universal Human Values and the Present World; VIII. New Relevance and Dimension of Gandhiji's Ideas; IX. Peaceful Methods: A Historical Necessity for Survival and Progress; X. Social Ethics; XI. Negative Results of the Present Policy; XII. Old Approach and New Reality; XIII. A Radically New Approach: Need for a Programme of National Consensus; XIV. The Problem of Unity; Whose Unity and Against Whom?; XV. New Issues, New Approach, New Movements. -Editor

Preface

Einstein was the first person to remark that atomic energy had changed everything except the think-

It is to the credit of Gorbachev that he has spelt out in concrete detail the unprecedented changes that have taken place in the world in the second half of the twentieth century, and the new thinking which, in his opinion, is necessary for dealing with the problems created by these changes. One may agree or disagree with Gorbachev, but his two basic propositions are incontestable, that is, that the world has changed drastically in this period and that new thinking and policies are urgently needed for resolving the threatening problems that now face mankind.

That is why all responsible people, in every walk of life, whether sympathetic or hostile to Marxism, have taken cognisance of Gorbachev's views since he emerged as the new leader of the Soviet Union. To repeat, one may agree or disagree with him, but no one can any longer bypass him.

It is elementary Marxism that the development of the social forces of production creates a new reality, new social and political problems, new class rela-

For the first time in history, nuclear energy and the scientific-technological revolution have created dechnological forces that can solve the global problem of hunger, disease and destitution within a few decades decades or destroy all life on earth, the only planet in space on which that 'miracle' is known to exist.

In such a situation, can the problems of the human tace be tackled in the old way? That is the question Gorbachev be tackled in the old way? Gorbachev has posed sharply before all the leaders of world. That is the of world opinion and world politics. That is the question which popular leaders in every country have to answer to answer, no matter whether they are in power or

He has stated repeatedly and with amazing candour that neither capitalism nor socialism nor their capitalism nor socialism nor their mutual relation capitalism nor socialism not old way. He has put forward his own proposals and is striving to implement them with tremendous vigour and tenacity combined with tactfulness.

In the sphere of international relations his new thinking and policies have already yielded results which have been acknowledged by friend and foe. A new era of detente has set in. The threat of human annihilation has been curbed.

Problems within the Soviet Union (for that matter, within all socialist countries) are extraordinarily vast. new and complex. It is going to take quite a few years before socialism is brought on a new even

keel.

Class struggle is there and is going to be there until society becomes classless (though new social contradictions will arise even after that stage is reached). But when the aggravation of class struggle beyond a point, as the aggravation of any other social or international conflict, necessarily leads to the threat of an atomic holocaust, it should be plain as daylight that class struggle also needs to be regulated and controlled.

Side by side with class struggle, the confrontation between the two sides of the class divide has to be alleviated by dialogue and negotiations. Areas of common global interest have to be identified and agreements in common mutual interest have to be arrived at. Universal human values have got to be given priority in settling disputes between contending

antagonistic interests.

This is by no means easy because however Communists and all peace-loving forces may want to do so, imperialists are still not reconcilled to that position. Skill lies in combining the pressure of the world forces of peace and progress with driving sense into the dense heads of diehard imperialists whose slogan is: "After me the deluge." And Gorbachev has proved that new thinking has started among the saner representatives of imperialism.

This is one of the most vital aspects of Gorbachev's new thinking and policies. And this is perfectly correct Marxism as it was understood by Marx, Engels and Lenin who always insisted that Marxism is a science that grows with life. It is not

a frozen mummy. It is a guide to action.

During the last three-four years I have bean constantly thinking whether Gorbachev's new thinking CC-0. In Public Domain. Gurukul Kangri Collection, Haridwar

MAINSTREAM April 29, 1989

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has some applicability to our internal problems in India, and if so, what it means concretely. That involves a reconsideration of Gandhiji's views and activities. This effort is a product of that thinking. I wish I could elaborate my views at greater length including some questions not dealt with in this pamphlet. But that is now not possible.

Some readers may think that my views are good if they can be implemented, but that they are unrealistic. Some Marxists may think I am deserting Marxism. But I do not think that any reader can say that the problems posed in this pamphlet are not real. If I am wrong, others can show the way out.

This pamphlet is meant for all who feel concerned about the state of affairs in our country and its destiny. Naturally enough, I address myself, first and foremost, to Communists since we have common basic digits of thought. So I speak primarily to the CPI, the CPI-M and even the AICP. I also speak to independent Communists not attached to any of the existing communist formations.

I am a member of the CPI and shall continue to remain so. But I have certain differences with all our existing communist formations, including my Party. It is not our tradition to express one's differences with the Party publicity and I feel extremely constrained in doing so. But the situation in the country and the state of the communist movement have compelled me to do so. A very broad and frank discussion of the issues raised by me has become necessary. I hope my position will be understood.

I would like to add a word for the CPI-M. I consider them a fraternal party with whom a frank and fraternal discussion is desirable and necessary. I would appeal to them to take my criticism in that spirit and give thought to it even though they may not agree with me. It is not only my experience but of many others that the CPI-M leadership is sharp in criticising others (nothing wrong) but becomes intolerant the moment it is criticised. Tolerance has to

For sometime I thought of including the role of Nehru and his policies in this pamphlet. But that would have made the issues dealt with very much more complicated. I have dealt with that question briefly in my recent pamphet, "The Problem of the Congress" (serialised in Mainstream, November-December, 1988). But it needs a more elaborate treatment which I may attempt later. Talegaon, February 16, 1989

I. Unique Phenomenon

AHATMA GANDHI was the first person in history to organise a mass political movement by adhering to peaceful, non-violent means as a matter of principle. And he built it into such a powerful force that it became the dominant instrument of achieving national independence. This unprecedented achievement was his unique contribution to world history.

II. Logic in Inconsistency

At the same time Gandhiji's thought process was

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennal and eGangotri rationalism. He never argued internal problems in not basically rooted in rationalism. that his non-violent methods were going to succeed because of certain national and international historic cal factors though they surely contributed to the success of his technique. On the contrary, he insisted that non-violence, for him, was a matter of faith; that "Truth was non-violence and non-violence was Truth"; and that both were a mandate of God conveyed to him through his "inner voice" . Naturally. we Marxists, do not subscribe to that philosophy.

This does not mean that Gandhiji was not practical. Considering the central aim on which all his thinking and activities were focussed, that is, the achievement of swaraj, he was supremely practical

His "inner voice" was amazingly flexible and adaptative. It guided him to boycott legislative councils and launch mass movements, as also to withdraw them and permit entry into legislatures in accordance with changing political conditions.

In 1920, participation in the legislative elections was "untruth" and amounted to participating in the Satanic violence of British rule. In 1937. it became permissible. When the Indian soldiers of the Garhwali regiment laid down their arms and refused to fire on non-violent satyagrahis at Peshawar in 1930, he refused to support their action But, through all these inconsistencies and zigzags what continued was his unflagging persistence in achieving independence through peaceful means.

This was a fantastic synthesis between principle and practice. By what thought process he worked it out, how he managed to reconcile his unbending faith with the practical requirements of the movement he led, is an enigma. But that he did so is a fact. Otherwise, he could not have succeeded in be coming and remaining the unquestioned leader of our freedom movement from the moment it became a mass force till it reeched its goal. sible explanation seems to be that he had an uncanny instinct for combining mystical faith with the demands of practical reason.

It is not that rationally minded leaders do not change their positions to suit changing conditions And often, on the face of it, they appear contradic tory. But such leaders justify them by pointing out the concrete factors of the situation which neces sitate the change in their tactics. Gandhiji, generally, did not do so. And when he did, it was only for the purpose of carrying with him those of his followers who did not accept his faith. That is the difference. I should like to state here that Marxist is the only philosophy which explains its policies a thoroughly rational, historical manner. There an element of contradictoriness, inconsistency, in all other viewpoints other viewpoints.

In a word, Gandhiji was, at once, a messianic visi onary and a cool, calculating businessman. Contra dictory, but true.

What we saw in Gandhiji's policies was that the kept the freedom movement within certain bound and prevented it from rising to a real, revolutional level. And this reading was not wrong. But, while we failed to see were we failed to see was that, through all his complete he construction mises, he constantly pressed forward. He did li surrender to British rule. Inch by inch, he made

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fulers retreat. That was what the mass of the Indian people saw and what was of historical importance. Our old explanation that Gandhiji's non-violence was a facade for putting the British rulers in a morally embarassing position and bargaining with them to secure concessions was superficial and lacked comprehensiveness. He did not apply his theories of non-violence, self-purification and change of heart only to the British rulers. He applied them to the entire spectrum of social, economic and political conflicts which he had to resolve. Above all, he paid the price of his life for achieving Hindu-Muslim unity on the basis of his faith, that God was love

victions of such a person are clearly above board. However, that is not the subject matter of this pamphlet. What I want to bring out is that in the radically new (qualitative) conditions that have developed after the Second World War, certain ideas and forms of struggle developed by Mahatma Gandhi have assumed new dimensions and converge with certain ideas and policies propounded by Gorbachev. And this is so despite the fact that Gandhiji based his policies on religious faith, and Gorbachev does so on the objective laws of historical development. It is also my purpose to bring out that both have great relevance for our present day problems in India.

and love was God. The depth and sincerity of con-

III. Who influences Whom?

The question is often raised as to how far the ideas of Gandhi and Nehru have influenced Gorbachev in bringing about the perestroika in international relations that he is fighting for with all his

This question is rather naive, apart from the fact that lurking behind it is the self-laudatory feeling that India has always led the world in the realm of

thought and ideas.

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The ideas of world leaders always act and react on one another, and influence one another. Was not Gandhi influenced by Tolstoy and Nehru by Marxism?

Indeed, so far as Marx, Engels and Lenin were concerned, they stated frankly that their views, theories and policies did not fall from the heavens. They did not invent them as brand new ideas uncon-

nected with the past and the present. In his famous article on Marx, Lenin wrote that German philosophy, French socialism and tevolutionary traditions, and English political economy were the three sources of Marxism. In fact the three sources of that revolufact the founders of Marxism insisted that revolutionary leaders must learn from the common, "unpeople. They assimilated the store of knowledge inherited from the past and raised it to higher, scientific level as demanded by the realities of contemporary life.

There is no wise man in the world who does not arn from the world who does not. learn from the wisdom of others. Those who do not, cease to grow, and stagnate.

IV. Convergence and its Historic Importance

So, the question is not whether Gorbachev has

taken something from Gandhi and Nehru or not. Gandhi was a Gandhian, and Gorbachev is a Marxist. That fact cannot change. The point is that the two are not altogether exclusive and certain thoughts and ideas of both converge at a point in certain conditions of history. And that convergence, in a world threatened with nuclear disaster, is of immense importance.

It is pointless to argue who is wiser and more original; and who has borrowed from whom. The task is to save humanity and assure its future progress by discovering and emphasising what is common to both, so that the united power of the people will

achieve the universal goal of mankind today.

V. Values and Social Norms

Engels said: "Freedom is the recognition of necessity." This appears as an assertion of determinism, a plea for surrendering to the powers that be. However, read in its context what this epigrammatic sen-

tence means is entirely different.

What Engels explains is that noble ideals and values are translated into practice when they become necessary (indispensable) for the life of society. In other words, principles and virtues become a social force and norm, not just because they are ideal, but when, and insofar as, they become necessary for the organised and orderly functioning of a given society.

Marx and Lenin also said that sages and prophets had dreamed about the freedom, equality and brotherhood of man for ages. But socialism actually comes into being in modern times when capitalism can no longer function as an orderly and tolerable society, and the reorganisation of society on a socialist basis becomes possible and necessary for human

life and progress.

How difficult and full of pitfalls this process is, we are now experiencing. But that does not negate the fact that there is no alternative to capitalist relations and values being replaced by socialist relations and values. The journey is very much longer and more painful than we thought a few decades ago. But retreat is no solution. Socialism is not only a virtue but a necessity. That is what Engels meant when he asserted that freedom was the recognition of necessity.

VI. Universal Human Values

One of the new formulations of Gorbachev which has received worldwide publicity is: "Universal human values have attained top priority in the present day world." This is not the usual language of Communists and has disturbed the conscience of certain orthodox Marxists.

The Marxist position that ideology and culture have a class character is well-known. But does that mean that Marxism does not recognise universal values that transcend the class division of society? It

does not.

In his inaugural address on the occasion of the foundation of the First International, Marx formulated the foreign policy of the International

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which he wanted all nations to follow, in the

following words:

"Vindicate the simple laws of morals and justice, which ought to govern the relations of private individuals, as the paramount laws of the intercourse of nations." (Selected Works, Vol. II, p. 18)

Lenin's decree on peace, issued immediately after the Second Congress of Soviets assumed power in 1917, is well-known. Lenin defends the proposals put forward in the decree by the words: "In accordance with the sense of justice of democracy in general, and of the toiling classes in particular..." (Selected Works, Vol. II, p. 228. Emphasis mine

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After the Russian revolution some firebrand young Bolsheviks launched an organisation called "Prolet-cult". Its aim was to set Russia on the rails of a brand new proletarian culture repudiating the culture of past societies. Lenin castigated them very sharply asserting that the edifice of proletarian culture had to assimmilate the cultural heritage handed down by history and raise it to a higher level.

Any number of such illustrations can be given. Universal human values were certainly recognised by

Marx and Lenin.

What that means is that while certain theories (and values) of exploiting classes have a gross class character, and while such classes distort and pervert universal human values for their narrow, selfish interest, that does not negate the fact that universal human values exist and are real.

However, there is no doubt that what Gorbachev says goes further than this position. He has said that such values "have attained top priority in the present day world". That calls for an explanation.

VII. Universal Human Values and the Present World

The first reason is the capacity and the danger of nuclear power destroying the fundamental basis of all values and culture, that is, human life itself. That makes the universal human value of the preservation of life on earth a categorically imperative necessity. And that cuts across, transcends all class divisions in society, since a nuclear war will destroy the exploiting classes no less than the exploited.

The second reason is that the scientific-technological revolution and the atomic-space age have made the world "extremely small". Even leaving out the threat of the atom bomb, no one can now set fire to his neighbour's house without the flames spreading to his own house. In other words, nations are now not only interdependent, they have

become integrated as never before.

This becomes clear as daylight if we just throw a glance at the new problems of ecology and the consequences of the revolution in communications and transport. Deadly pollution of chemical wastes and radioactivity is carried by wind, oceanic currents and rivers across nations and continents, without making any distinction between White and Black

races, advanced and developing countries, capitalist and socialist countries.

The revolution in communication is almost unbelievable. Not only has the circulation of newspapers grown enormously, radio and television have reached remote villages of the most backward continents carrying knowledge (good and bad) to utterly illiterate and ignorant people. And that in a world where people even at the lowest level are discontented with the conditions of their life and are aspiring to change them. There is no inert mass anywhere, any longer, in any corner of the globe.

As for the revolution in transport, disgraceful as it is, thanks to the speed and volume of air traffic, AIDS has invaded the East from the West in as many weeks as it would have taken years at the

beginning of this century.

The same applies to the alarming international trade in narcotics and fire-arms. And as for the atom bomb, scientists have told us that it is no longer a question of whether, but when, private individuals will be able to manufacture atomic weapons.

And these problems are not limited to the sphere of technology and science. The egoist and uncontrolled utilisation of the scientific-technological revolution for notional and class interests has precipitated various economic crises which did not exist as recently as in the first half of this century.

The USA was unquestionably the most powerful economic and industrial country after the Second World War. Within a couple of decades, it became

the creditor of the world.

Today, the industries and financial resources of Japan are ousting the USA from its own home market. The foreign liabilities of the USA (arising from massive foreign trade and budget deficits and an astronomical public debt) have surpassed its foreign assets. The money-lender of the world has became a debtor. Uncle Sam is on the way of becoming a dependency of Japan.

An ironical vengeance is overtaking the USA in its relations with the Third World. The loans given by it to the developing countries (the world famous 'debt trap') have became not only unrepayable, but

also unrecoverable.

One of the famous fables of Aesop precisely pinpoints the present relation between the USA and the Third World. The USA is literally killing the goose that lays the golden eggs. If it kills the goose it can get no more eggs. If it wants them it has got to arrive at a new relation with the Third World which will provide for a balanced, mutual interest of both. And that means the New International Economic Order.

Orthodox Communists are aghast when Gorbarchev speaks of the "integrated world", and of the indispensable necessity of all nations restructuring their relations in away that will achieve their "nul ual, common" interests. Either they are blind, or they do not want to open their eyes.

Integration is an undeniable technological, scientific, economic and political fact. What follows is that the problems created by such integration cannot be solved except by the collective efforts of nations.

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Of course, this does not put an end to international VIII. New Relevance and Dimension of course, and contradictions. They are very

of course, the contradictions. They are very and initial fact, threatening. Struggles are going to grave, in But even they are now influenced by the global reality, of integration and the threat of nuc-lear disaster. They have to be given, and are being given, a new turn. Witness the new turn in US-USSR relations and the manner in which the problems of West Asia, Angola, Namibia, Nicaragua, Afghanistan, etc. are being settled.

So the question is whether various confrontations are to be allowed to sharpen till they inevitably blow up the world, or whether they are to be overcome in the common interest of all.

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That is why Gorbachev is saying that world history has reached a point where humanity has only two alternatives. Peace, freedom of choice, cooperation and progress for all, or conflict, war and the common annihilation of all.

And if these are not universal human values, what else are they? What is more, now they are not only virtue, they are a necessity. That is what is meant when he says that these values "have top priority in the present day world".

We arrive at the same point if we approach the

problem from another angle.

No need to repeat that the nuclear threat is a threat for every man, woman and child on our planet. It is so grim that barring extreme reaction in the USA that will prefer its own extermination to peace and democracy in the world, larger and larger sections of US monopoly capital have started taking a realistic and sober view of the problem. So have the people in the USA and Europe and most West European governments.

People and entire nations all over the world, irrespective of their social systems (the non-aligned countries, for instance) have come out in support of a nuclear free world, disarmament, cooperation in mutual interest on the basis of national independence, a New International Economic Order, and so on. They are all for peace, against war, against the use of force in international relations and want to put an end to hunger, disease and sub-human living conditions. It is not an exaggeration to say that almost the entire world barring a fiendish, small minority now stands for these ideals.

In such a situation, are we to say that we stand and fight for universal human values or are we going to say that the exploited masses alone have true human values and declare a war against all the

rest for their achievement? There are classes and there is class struggle which is going to continue. But, at their base is humanity, the human family. When its very existence is at stake, it is stake, it is a grotesque perversion of Marxism to deny this reality in the name of class exploitation of and class struggle. The path to the abolition of class explained for class exploitation now lies through the struggle for saving humanion of saving humanity and ending the domination of nation over nation. And this struggle has to be on the basic and values the basis of common human interests and values against those who deny them, not on the basis of 'my interest against yours''.

I have gone into the question of Gorbachev's new thinking because I want to argue that we have reached a point of convergence between that new thinking and certain ideas and forms of struggle of Gandhi though the latter were based on divine faith and not on the objective laws of history like the ideas and proposals of Gorbachev.

IX. Peaceful Methods: A Historical Necessity for Survival and Progress

Take, for instance, the central principle of Gandhiji's ideas and policies, that is, insistence on non-violence for resolving all national and social conflicts. It is now the accepted principle (as also the endeavour) of the United Nations that war and the use or threat of force have to be ruled out as a means of settling international disputes and con-All such contradictions have to be settled peacefully, through negotiations, and taking into consideration the reasonable interests of the conparties. Gorbachev goes further and tending explains repeatedly that if this principle is not strictly observed in practice regional conflicts in various patts of the world can easily precipitate a world war.

Let us think of the situation and conflicts within our own country. With hardly any exception all the violence that is taking place in India today is being committed by various extremely reactionary, vicious, anti-national forces (apart from such violence on the part of the state security forces as is unjustified and anti-people). All divisive and disruptive forces are taking the cover of religion (communalism and secessionism), caste, language, ethnicity, etc. and resorting to rampant violence, arson, loot,

murder and what not.

The very recent Andhra experience of the violence that erupted after the murder of a Congress MLA is even more shocking and revealing. It did not originate in the usual issues related to religion, caste, regionalism, etc. though it got mixed up with the ubiquitous caste factor later on. It was based on the extensive utilisation of criminal, gangster mafias (euphemistically called anti-social elements) by the Telugu Desam Party and the Congress-I for sheer power politics. This is the first occasion on which arson and loot has been utilised on such a massive scale for power politics, by contending political parties against each other.

I need not refer to the vast increase in ordinary crime such as dacoities, murders, etc. organised by powerful gangs of smugglers and other criminal elements. And then the abnormal increase in social crime such as sati, dowry killings, rape, violence

against Harijans, is also there.

The point I am stressing is that the problem of violence in India today has become, dominantly, a problem of the violence of the worst anti-national and anti-social forces in the country. These forces are not only threatening our national integrity. They are tearing our very social fabric to shreds.

On the other hand, paradoxical as it may seems Foundation to make adherence to peaceful is a fact that Communists, who for years held that a socio-political revolution in India would have to be a violent revolution, have become practically the only political party that does not resort to violence, except for self-defence when it becomes unavoidable. All our activities, including all mass movements led by us, have become scrupulously peaceful and nonviolent. What may happen in the unforseeable future cannot be predicted. But, our present perspective of India's socio economic and political transformation is surely a perspective of peaceful mass struggles combined with parliamentary activity.

(Lest my attention is drawn to it, I will confess to what is an ironical tragedy. While we have given up violence in our struggles against the class enemy, occasionally we resort to it in our own internal

I am not suggesting that this is wrong. On the contrary, it is my definite opinion that this policy is correct. But, it has implications and leads to certain conclusions to which we give little thought and which we do not formulate in clear terms. I want to formulate them frankly and clearly.

First: We have accepted peaceful methods as a matter of policy though we do do not subscribe to

the Gandhian philosophy of non-violence.

Second: In the given conditions violence serves the aims of the worst anti-national forces in the country. It has become their "method of struggle". If India is to progress as an integrated political entity, and it can progress only as an integrated entity, then such advance has got to be brought about by non-violent, peaceful methods. Peaceful methods are not only a virtue. They have become a historical, political necessity.

Third: What follows from the two preceding

methods a plank of our political programme, and campaign for it in our mass agitation and activities. Of course, this does not exclude exposure of and opposition to all anti-people, unjustified violence of the state security forces. Nor does it exclude unavoidable violence for self-defence. But, the point is that we have to make it clear that all those who love the country and desire its progress have got to adhere to peaceful methods. Those who resort to violence are agents of fratricidal strife, disruption and national dismemberment. This line has to be clearly drawn.

Communists and the Lefts, in general, may feel shocked by the three sharp furmulations I have made above. My reply is that this is precisely what is implicit in the policy we have been following in our mass activities and struggles for quite a long time now. Either that policy is opportunist or it is justified by the new political reality which has emerged in recent years. My position is that it is the result of that new reality. Then why not state it in clear, explicit terms? Pragmatic adjustments to new reality are good far as they go. But their generalised, clear formulation becomes a firm guide for future action. And we must not shrink such a formulation because it smells of Gandhism.

The day is not far off when only gangster gangs will be able to participate in elections. And the employment of such gangs needs huge piles of money tucked away in the black market. Democrats and the Left will be forced out of the electoral process.

A national campaign against the criminalisation of politics, against the deadly nexus between politicians, criminal gangs and the police which threatens the end of democratic politics has become an impera-

tive necessity. (To be continued)

P.N. HAKSAR

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Third World and its Dilemma of Development

PRANAB K. BANERJEE

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UNTIL the end of the Second World War which generally marked the change of traditional colonialism, there was not enough awareness among economists on the 'backward regions' from where natural resources were being siphoned to the manufacturing units of industrial societies. The colonial political system was experimenting with different production methods and trade on one hand, and it was largely ignoring the interest of raw material suppliers on the other. Interestingly, till then neither the governments nor the economists of industrial societies adequately cared to reflect on such score, at least in on organised manner. Amazingly, it was taken as established by 'experience' and 'observation' that folks in the backward regions were so constituted that they reacted differently from Europeans. Besides, it was assumed that they normally did not respond positively to opportunities for improving their incomes and living standards. Generally, they were also supposed to be racially inferior.

In more sophisticated writings though these were claimed to have roots in various elements in the local system of social relations and institutions with which the colonial administrations operated, in reality the European minds generally had failed to appreciate the growth institutions of the developing world which flowed from the cultural stream of an altogether different society. Occasionally, it was also noted that under-nutrition and inferior living standards among the masses of people lowered their stamina. The climate was seen as a crucial cause of impairing people's ability and willingness for sustained work

The decolonisation hurricane that swept over the golobe after the Second World War, created an altogether new situation. From that time a steadly growing number of economists were drawn into the study of planning for development of the developing regions. Obviously, this was not an independent development economics as a science, but clearly brought about by a radically changed political world environment for research in economic development. In the cold war that developed simultaneously with the end of the colonial era, the socialists distinctly laid responsible colonial era, the socialists distinctly laid responsibility for underdevelopment of the newly freed countries on the colonial power system that was now changing its face. A part of the elite of the newly index in four forms. newly independent states that had fought for independent states that had fought for independence, now identified itself with progressive forces and found reasons to agree to a great extent with socialist in design to agree to a great extent with socialist ideas that supported their hope for the implementation of policies that would accelerate the growth process in newly freed states.

Categorically, they reacted against the idea in the The author teaches Economics in the Delhi Delhi.

Categorically, they reacted against the idea in the College of Arts and Commerce, University of

colonial theory that people in the developing states were racially inferior to the Europeans in terms of calibre. They then threw out not only the racist dogma, but also the stress in the more developed colonial ideas on rigid and irrational institutions and attitudes. Also, they rejected the argument of climatic conditions being an impediment of development.

All this strengthened their optimism as they embarked upon development planning. In the new situation the Western economists gradually transformed their traditional colonial theory into the neocolonial one¹ which has a different strategy to draw Third World resources with advanced marketing devices.

The Colonial Approach

There has been the natural tendency among Western economists to utilise the models they were accustomed to use for the analysis of the industrially advanced societies, to examine the growth possibilities of the developing world. The concepts used income, distribution, consumption, savings, investment, output, supply, demand and prices, all in predominantly free market systems, and in aggregate and average terms - were not in accord with reality in the developing economies. The resulting analysis, though apparently looked real, was able to present only the partial picture of the Third World. In studying the developing economies their biased deliberations with figures reached a climax — and this is still laregly true about much of the economic literature on issues of development.

The deficiency of the statistics being presented is not due merely to the inferior quality of statistical information in many newly freed states, but basically due to the false categories under which data are observed and recorded. The few economists in colonial times who took interest in studying how the masses lived and worked, very seldom produced statistics on unemployment but dealt with the problem of worklessness in general and institutional terms. The observations in the economic analysis of colonial times concerning underdevelopment in the stagnant regions were, to a significant extent, caused by rigid institutions of the industrially advanced societies that very little succeeded to realise the local and different conditions of the Third World. Though economists in the colonial times knew how poverty itself caused poverty, they put insufficient interest to discover the basic roots of poverty which were going deep through colonial practices. One cared little to nutritional and other deficiencies realise why influenced adversely labour productivity while the Third World continuously supplied raw materials to the industrial world. Besides, the question of income distribution which is a significant factor of economic growth, was generally ignored.

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Another important factor that was assumed to be playing a determining role in economic development of the stagnant zone had been the climatic conditions.2 It was asserted that warm climate and humidity in most colonial economies caused hazards in development though such an idea had no scientific basis.

The colonial development models have been generally based on certain conditions that existed in the European industries in particular and the society in general. There had been very little thrust to historically understand the production process of the colonised states which evolved a different production system over a period of time. By and large European devices manufactured strategies to paralyse the possibilities of growth through indigenous techniques of the non-White regions.

The Question of Technology

Only after the Second World War the Third World realised the significance of alternative techhology which, many economists believed, could emerge right from the local production conditions. It has been an interesting phase in transitory development in which many planners advocated for transfer of technology. Because of multiplicity of shades in character of the Third World, both the fronts failed to evolve a generally acceptable doctrine on the score of development through technology. On various issues there have been shifts in emphasis in various groups of each front and as a result, power blocks

got room to play their own 'roles.'3

Identifying the right type of technology has been a crucial task for development in the developing world. It does require technological change over a period of time in terms of commodities and services that have been produced and processes that were responsible for production. Obviously, in a Third World economy these two factors are not independent of the questions of employment and income distribution. So while formulating an appropriate policy for the right type of technology, one has no choice but to categorically address to the most pressing issues of an economy in which income distribution has implicit roots. In the context of this study, tecnnology refers to different types of production systems which may be embodied in the form of a machinery or equipment or information, suitable in a particular social and economic system. Ironically, alien technology, despite being a product of a different cultural demand, has been able to reach, through neo-colonial methods, the crucial avenues of most Third World states. In the present world order developing economies, for obvious reasons, are dependent on industrially capital-intensive production centres for higher technology. Such economies, unlike the affluent ones, are heterogenous and function on a hierarchical basis with limited mobility within such groups in the society.4

Historically, such economies have been acquiring technology, though many a time the inappropriate ones. However, technologies assimilating into the development process depend on making the appropriate choices and adopting the alternative policies with an aim of developing a technological base. So we must admit that science and technology policy

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Evidently, a growth programme must have object tives of organically linking science with technology that are responsible for production. It is this organic link that characterises development from under. development⁵ besides signifying the native conditions of a society.

All these issues have now led to the widely held view that technology should just not be planted to protect only the supply side interest. But whatever technology is transferred, or is intended to be used in the developing world, should be made appropriate to the needs of the economies concerned, if it is to contribute to real development. In general, it is this adaptation and/or evolution of technology to suit the particular needs of backward economies that is meant by the concept of appropriate technology. Broadly, it is labour-intensive.

Mainstream development theories, from which most articulations in support of labour-intensive concepts emerge, regard this phenomenon as a characteristic of underdevelopment or as a constraint to development. This approach, for a variety of reasons, does not take due account nor does it embody an understnding of the process through which such a characterstic or constraint has histori-

cally emerged.

Dialectically examined, technology is not external or neutral in the historical process. Technological change in particular, whether it comes about by original invention, imitation, adaptation, or a combination of all three, is induced by the critical needs and overall dynamics of every society. Thus a particular economic system needs its own specific technology, and broadly, it has to evolve within the system⁶ though inputs from alien sources can, surely, be used for better results.

An objective study of Third World production activities suggest alternative techniques can, of course, be devised. In other words, a necessary strategy that calls for a rural and labour-intensive development, and necessary techniques, can surely

be developed.7

In a limited and technical sense, it appears possible for the developing economies to choose more appropriate technologies and techniques from among the given set of available techniques, and perhaps even broaden the range from which choices, are made. This would have the effect of increasing the demand for labour, raising the real wage level and increasing the volume and scope of capital and consumer goods available to satisfy the market However, before a significant breakthrough and restructuring of an economy's technological base could occur, decisions and sections of a non-technology nature mould be sections. technology nature would have to be made and taken that would redirect energies and resources of a developing economy towards a series of economic development, its goals and objectives that were conducive to the widespread adoptation of such technologies and techniques.

The Neo-Colonial Strategy

The reforms suggested to developing economis

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by Western deep root in the supply forces of the international market in industrially advanced powers in the supply advanced powers have been which industrially advanced powers have been which industrially advanced powers have been playing an effective role. In colonial times there playing an unit-in mechanism that almost automatiexisted a metropolitan power to ally itself with the cally lead groups in a colony and often to create privileged groups. To support its rule, the colonial administration thus had an interest in withholding and even weakening the inherited social and economic structure in the colony. Interestingly, a similar mechanism is now working in recently freed states.

In all these days the policy machinery of most developing states for a variety of reasons got strongly influenced by the supply side interest of multinationals in an organised manner. The public decisions on development and technology, to a significant extent, have been the result of a satellite psyche which many a time ignored the local cultural conditions in designing a development programme. There has been tremendous infiltration of alien intellectual and other inputs in most Third World states that results in far-flung consequences. This has possibly been responsible for corruption which, in a sense, is functioning as an organised and powerful industry causing many crises in which the question of income distribution has been a significant

Neo-classical strategies are equipped with very sophisticated devices for they historically evolved over some centuries. The European politics, industrialisation, trade, military, and marketing have been some of the ingredients that helped neo-colonial strategies to emerge so effectively. Neocolonialism carefully chose to have its basic roots at the level of psyche which is the fundamental source of any human articulation.

Conclusion

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The Third World, as it is conveniently seen, has been the den of poverty which everybody wants to eliminate at the earliest opportunity. Many deliberations have been held on this score in different parts of the world, but still there is much to be desired to achieve meaningful results. The developing states have been buried under hard debts and the surplus resources of industrial economies found outlets to colonise afresh in a new framework those states that had earned independence during the last few decades.

All earlier deliberations on the question of developing the Third World led to understand one point that pover the control of crises: that poverty has not been the root-cause of crises; rather it is the result of a long series of ingredients ranging from colonialism to neo-colonialism. One cannot fight cannot fight poverty by superficially creating jobs and offering temporary aid to the poor: The political solutions cal solutions projudiced proved themselves either unrealistic or prejudiced to deal with the crises of the majority of the world population.

Transnational agencies, operating in various forms, ave been all agencies, operating in various in the have been able to generate pressure groups in the lopment models of the subscribe to the ideas of development models of their supply lines. The lopment models flowing from their supply lines. The nationalist nationalist ideas, that were seeds of struggle

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGangotri
by Western economists have an implicit deep root against the colonial power for freedom, were declarby the supply forces of the international market in ed 'obsolete' and they got tacts of multinationals. Within a span of a few decades only most parts of the Third World falsely felt the urge of modernising development at the shortest possible time. Despite continuous famines, wars, epidemics, and striking loss of identity, the Third World development mechanism paid little attention to realise that development that generates from cultural consciousness, cannot possibly be parcelled from alien societies.

The entire population as an organic composition of the society plays an affirmative role with a crosssection opinions to bring about development. It evolves over a period of time and takes its own shape. The history of European development has left this experience for understanding and examining the origin; process, and the results of growth.

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Groundwater Resources and Rural Development

B.D. DHAWAN

THE performance of our agriculture sector is now widely identified with the development of groundwater irrigation in general and tubewell irrigation in particular. Such identification, or perception, is quite noticeable in popular and semi-academic writings of the post-HYV era beginning with the mid-sixties. This is quite in contrast to the earlier perception, that any irrigation as such is good for our agriculture. The new perception has given rise to an impression as if surface water-based irrigation, whether from big rivers or from rivulets and seasonal streams, is inferior to groundwater-based irrigation. No wonder, then, planners are strongly urged upon to put more emphasis on the establishment of tubewells and dugwells than on surface irrigation works, especially the big ones based on the damming of big rivers of the nation.

Here, several questions arise. Is it true that groundwater development has been underemphasised and canal irrigation overemphasised — in Indian planning? Given the hydrological and economic linkages between groundwater and surface water (some water experts even refuse to consider these two bodies of water as separate entities) is it meaningful to talk of superiority of one over the other as a source of irrigation? Given the diversity of this country in the endowment of the water resources, can we really proceed on with a uniform policy for the country as a whole? How far are the protagonists of groundwater cause like B. B. Vohra truly correct

in their following perceptions?

Certain facts need to be presented here:

(1) groundwater resource is much more bountiful than surface water; (2) in comparison to big dams, groundwater irrigation is a low cost option for our economy; (3) groundwater-based farming has much higher land productivity — and is much less vulnerable to drought; (4) environmental degradation, forest submergence, population dislocation and dam — oustees rehabilitation problems are absent in groundwater irrigation; (5) unlike substantial underutilisation of irrigation capacity observed in the case of big dams, there is almost full utilisation in the case of wells and tubewells, (6) the time-lag between investment and returns is low in groundwater case, whereas big projects linger on for decades without completion.

It is not my purpose today to challenge the veracity of everything that is asserted in favour of groundwater irrigation and against big dams. As

The author is a Professor in the Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi. He presented this paper at a seminar on "Technology and its impact on Rural Development in India", held on February 7, 1989 under the auspices of the Department of Economics, Lady Shri Ram College, New Delhi.

a groundwater economist, I am more interested in restoring perspectives on groundwater. It is a very complex resource and there is ample room for misunderstandings, more so when any one generalises from limited regional experiences for the country of continental dimensions Furthermore, one has to be very circumspect in interpretation of facts and in drawing policy implications.

The irrigation capability of our water resources is rather modest, except in the high rainfall regions like east Gangetic plains and the Konkan-Malabar coast. Our tappable or exploitable water resources cannot fully cover all our arable land. This leaves us with no option but to tap all our irrigation resources so as to maximise the irrigation coverage

for our agriculture sector.

For much of India, it is a myth that there is plenty of groundwater underneath the land. Ground water is indeed more plentiful in natural occurrence than is surface water. But this comparative ranking of the two water sources is in stock terms. In order to sustain irrigated farming in perpetuity the stock concept of groundwater resources is irrelevant Instead, we have to go by the flow concept, where by groundwater potential for irrigation purpose is assessed in terms of annual additions to the stock of groundwater. In flow terms, our endowment of groundwater is far less bountiful than that of surface water. The official estimates reveal that the ultimate irrigation potential of groundwater in India is for about 40 million hectares of crop area, which constitutes about 35 per cent of the total irrigation potential of the country that is attainable with full exploitation of our exploitable water resources.

Those who plead for according high priority to the development of groundwater-based irrigation must appreciate the limits in this regard. On the one hand, there is the natural paucity of this resource, except in the east Gangetic plains. On the other hand, by establishing about 9 million dugwells and over 3.5 million tubewells by the mid-eighties we have established irrigation capacity for nearly 28 million ha of crop area. If the target of seven million ha for the Eighth Plan (now revised upwards to about nine million ha) is realised, it would be incorrect to say that groundwater development has not received due attention in our planning. Intes pective of the superiority of groundwater over surface in incident face irrigation, we have to persist with the develop ment of surface irrigation works for meeting our irrigation needs. Otherwise, the era of groundwater mining may commence in a serious manner.

Irrigation development is a very costly proposition, and any one talking of developing ground water irrigation at a fraction of the high cost of major irrigation. major irrigation works is not taking an appropriate view of costs involved. To begin with, the totality

(Continued on page 30)

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FIER HARKISHAN Singh Surject's "CPI-M and the A Slogan of Communist Unity, in the People's pemocracy (March 5, 1989) has appeared Sumit Chakravartty's 'Towards Communist Re-Unification' in the Mainstream (March 11, 1989). As stated by HKS at the outset: "The leaders of the CPI in preparation of the Fourteenth Congress of their Party are constantly raising the question of Communist unity." The viewpoint of 'well-wishers' expressed by HKS may well mean that of the CPI!

Some well-wishers of the communist movement feel that since the CPI has come closer to the CPI-M in relation to the tactical line pursued in the country, and that it new stands for the removal of the Rajiv Gandhi Government to be replaced by a unity of the Left, democratic and secular forces, the basic difference between the two have

been resolved...

lagree with HKS when he says that there can be no communist unity "until and unless the programmatic differences are resolved". According to him, the basic questions that a party programme is expected to decide are: 'the class character of the state, stage of the revolution, and the path of the revolution'. He goes on to say that both the Communist Parties agree that 'the stage of the revolution is anti-feudal, anti-imperialist, anti-monopoly, and democratic', and the class alliance 'consists of the working class, the peasantry, petty-bourgeoisie and the non-monopolist bourgeoisie'. But the basic difference is 'on the character of the state, and the role of various classes in carrying forward the revolu-

According to the CPI-M the Indian state is a bourgeois-landlord state led by the big bourgeoisie, while the CPI holds that it is a state of the national bourgeoisie which has strong links with the landlord class. As far as the class characterisation of the Indian state is concerned, the CPI-M's definition is more explicit and correct and it seems that the CPI is converging towards this definition. If this trend continues the time is not far off when there will be near unanimity on the programme between the two parties. Will then these two CPs unite? I don't think

It is half-truth to say that the Indian state is a class state constituted by the bourgeoisie and landlord classes and led by the big bourgeoisie. DN in his temarkable paper Indian Big Bourgeoisie and the National Question in Economic and Political Weekly (March 4, 1989) points out that the Indian big bourgeoisie did not come into being 'through a process of centralisation and concentration from smaller capitals. capitals, nor did it develop in a revolutionary way, as Marx soid it develop in a revolutionary way, as Marx said, out of the producer, that is, artisan and crafts-west. It was and crafts-worker, classes as in the West. It was already a king of the producer, that is, in the west. It was already a king of the producer, that is, in the west. It was already a king of the producer, that is, in the west. already a big mercantile and money bourgeoisie when it was gemercantile and money british when it was first confronted by the ruling British capital. It did retrieved to the ruling British capital, It did not develop indigenous technology and machinery, but imported it. The three sections of the big pre-industrial bourgeoisie who made their transition from trade to industry have been demarcated caste-wise by DN are follows:

The first to make the transition from trade to industry were the merchants of Bombay, like the Jeejeebhoys and Tatas. They imported British manufactures and exported Indian raw cotton. They also had interests in shipping and the China (opium) trade. The Banias of Gujarat had the same background, though with a lesser foreign trade connection. In the interior of the country were the Marwaris, who acted as merchants, moneylenders and bankers rather than carrying on proper middlemen activities. They were important both in the internal trade of the country and procuring raw materials for export, though not in the actual export. This was the second of the sections of the Indian bourgeoisie to make the transition to industry. It included the Birlas, Singhanias and Thapars. The third group came from among the moneylending landowners like Goenka and Bangur.

The predominant section of this big bourgeoisie came from North India and its ritual status in the

caste system was the twice-born Vaishya:

In ritual terms in the caste system, the long distance merchants and bankers had a higher status. They like the Marwari and Gujarati Banias and the Agarwal and Vaish communities of UP, were usually recognised as belonging to the vaishya caste of dwijas (twice born)...

This predominant big bourgeoisie discriminated against the traders of other nationalities and castes, which hindered the normal development of capita-

lism as noted by D.R. Gadgil:

Ray points out that the Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee Reports were full of complaints from the local traders, Bengalis, Oriyas, Assamese, and so on about the unfair dealings and practices of the Banias from Rajputana and Gujarat. The practices of the merchant-bankers were such that they favoured their caste-fellows and discriminated against outsiders. Credit and other trade terms were substantially easier for those belonging to the Bania caste credit networks for trading, banks to accommodate goods and for remittances (Timberg, 1976).

It is no wonder that the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce, an association of mainly Bengalis, complained to the Bengal Provincial Banking that the Enquiry Marwaris, who controlled indigenous banking Calcutta's system, favoured their caste fellows and did not put their money in bank stocks where it could "serve the general trading interest. (Timberg, 197,58)...

Because they hailed from the Hindi heartland. which was the cradle and citadel of the caste system, they were essentially the Hindu big bourgeoisie, and hence championed the causes of Hindi for gaining an all-India market and the caste system for gaining

religious legitimacy:

... a policy of building the pan-Indian nation was adopted. This was signalled by a double change in the features of the Indian national movement. Starting with Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal and Lala Lajpat Rai and going to Gandhi, a Hindu colour was imparted to the notion of Indian nationalism. The Hindu colour was expressed, on the one hand, by Bankimchandra's anti-Muslim and pro-British Anandmath and Gandhi's Ram Rajya. Along with this was the decision to promote Hindi as the national language. Non-Hindi big bourgeoise groups, as the Gujarati Banias.

MAINSTREAM April 29, 1989

fashioning an all-India market, based on pan-Indian nationalism. It is interesting to note that some upper caste groups, which were not big bourgeoisie interested in all-India markets, like the Tamil Brahmins, also supported Hindi as the national language. (Anaimuthu, 1988, 31).

I have repeatedly pointed out that as against the materialist philosophy espoused by the Western counterparts of the Indian bourgeoisie and also against the indigenous anti-caste Charvakan materialism, Indian big bourgeoisie adopted the caste-defending Vedanta as its official philosophy. It was bound to antagonise the Sudra and Ati-Sudra castes which becomes evident from the rise of non-Brahmin and Dalit movements under the banner of non-Brahminic philosophies like Charvaka, Sankhya, Buddhism, Saivism, etc. It is in reaction, again, to the pan-Hindu nationalism that the pan-Islam nationalism arose:

...Given the crucial importance of the state machinery in the transition to capitalist industry, and the use of caste discrimination by the already established Indian big bourgeoisie against the outsiders attempting to enter, the ranks of capitalist industrialists, the Muslim bourgeoise elements sought to gain an area where the community's numerical majority would enable them to use the state machinery for capitalist accumulation.

DN calls Indian bourgeoisie a class, while D.R. Gadgil prefers to call it a community. I have proved in my review of E.M.S. Namboodiripad's book 'A History of Indian Freedom Struggle', published in the Marathi monthly Satyashodhak Marx-vadi (March 87), that though the National Congress was considered to be a secular party, it was in reality a party of caste Hindu majority. DN's paper vindicates my conclusion. The secular veil of the Congress-I has worn so thin that now it reveals its naval cord with Hindu fundamentalism. For the very reason that the Indian big bourgeoisie have originated directly from the pre-British high caste mercantile and money capital and retain their semifeudal high caste character even in their industrial transformation, it will be insufficient to characterise them simply as a class, but must be characterised by the duality of caste-class. HKS lays great stress on a 'deeper understanding by a Communist Party of the science of Marxism-Leninism and its application to the concrete conditions of a country' in which that party is called upon to lead the revolution to success. This science has failed to cognise the unique class reality and its historicity, and in its present form is incapable of cognising such non-class societies. Instead of developing this tool further, the leaderships of the traditional Communist Parties insist on applying it to 'the concrete conditions' of

Nobody can deny that the Dalits and the Adivasis, who constitute 22.5 per cent of the Indian population, are the greatest victims of the age-old caste system. The Mandal Commission has proved that the Other Backward Castes (OBCs) of all Indian religions, who comprise 52 per cent of the Indian people, are also the victims, next only to the SC/ST, of the caste system and has recommended that they should also be given reservation by State Governments. It means that 74.5 per cent of the Indian

Digitized by Arya Samai Foundation Chennal and eGangotri exploited and oppressed by the supported the Hindi decision, obviously in the interests of population are stellar exploited and oppressed by the supported the Hindi decision, obviously in the interests of population are stellar to the based on papeludian acres system. Though the literacy rate for the caste system. Though the literacy rate for the whole country is 36 per cent, it is 24 per cent for the Dalis and 16 per cent for the Adivasis. As calculated by Vijav Naik and Shailaja Prasad in their paper "On levels of living of Scheduled Castes and Tribes" in Economic and Political Weekly (July 18, 1984), the poverty line of the SC/STs is far higher than the national one, and the poverty line of the OBCs is somewhere between that of the SC/STs and the national one. Bonded labourers are still recruited exclusively from the SC/STs and the womenfolk of these bonded labourers have no alternative but to embrace prostitution. The SC/STs still live outside Indian villages in boycotted localities, and the urban slums are tenanted exclusively by SC/STs and the OBCs. In exercising their right to vote the SCs and STs are still at the mercy of the local landed gentry and their goons in the Hindi belt. This social proletariat of India, instead of becoming the vaneuard of the Indian revolution, is still the reserve force of the caste-class ruling establishment. The OBCs of every Indian religion, instead of flocking under the banner of the class democratic revolution, are swelling the counter-revolutionary army of the fundamentalists of every Indian religion. The caste-class counter-revolution is rapidly swinging to the offersive The fundamentalists represented on the national plane by parties like the BJP, the Muslim League, etc. cannot be isolated simply on the amorphous programme of anti-communalism.

The masses of the SCs/STs and the OBCs cannot be won for the revolution merely by economic class struggles. Only a programme of caste-class democratic revolution promising the enactment of a law liquidating the caste-class system can attract them towards the democratic revolution. With the incorporation of the programme of caste annihilation in the programme of class democratic revolution, will it be transformed into an Indian Democratic Revolution Genuine and lasting communist unity can be forged only on the basis of such a programme of the Indian

Democratic Revolution.

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Religion, Rushdie, Contradictions

RAFIQ Zakaria's article "West rises against Islam" (Mainstream, March 25, 1989) has aroused many questions about religion, reason, state of Islamic religion and its perception by the West, etc.

Religion to my mind is a set of beliefs and rituals, in order to draw strength especially in times of crisis - ups and downs of life - and to give spiritual satisfaction, that is, inner satisfaction by purification of one's self in a qualitative manner.

Since religion is made for human beings and not vice-versa, it is essential for any religion, to uphold the dignity of human life, for all human beings are equal, irrespective of whatever set of beliefs or reli-

gion they follow. The validity of a religion is also determined by its teachings being compatible with reason in any area which reason can penetrate. A religion cannot be called a true religion is it contradicts thoroughly verifiable facts or sound reasoning based on these facts, and also consistency based on common sense as well as verifiable scientific findings and

theories.

As the times change, new discoveries and ideas in all spheres of life keep enriching our human heritage of knowledge. It is the questioning mind, the rational, logical and strong mind that can question the established ideas, myths and inconsistencies in any given faith, be it Islam, Hindu or Christianity, and not follow it blindly. Those who do follow blindly, especially the zealous bigots, oppose it with great vehemence, very often violently and emotionally and not rationally with ideas. The opposition faced by Raja Ram Mohan Roy for questioning Hindu religion for sati, widow remarriage, infanticide, child marriage and polygamy, etc., and very recently opposition to the abolition of untouchability — when there was strong oppostion to temple entry by the lower castes in Rajasthan and Gujarat — prove this point. All those who opposed this, did so without using any logic. reason and non-acceptance of the highest value, of all human beings being equal.

So the opposition comes only from the vested established interests, as the revealed inherent contradiction in their set of beliefs, make them feel very insecuted by ignorant, very insecure and unsure, supported by ignorant, illiterate masses flared up by illiterate masses, with their passions flared up by inflamatory speeches and writings.

Similar is the case of Salman Ru hdie. Strongest teactions have come only from the fundamentalists like Syed Shahabuddin and his likes, who reacted emotionally habuddin and his likes, without even emotionally by resorting to violence, without even regarding the book. A reason, a cause was found to further the to further their political interests though communal

based. It was the same story all over, whether it was Indian, Pakistan or Iran. Very clearly India has banned the book for political reasons - very unfortunate for a democratic and secular state. the teachings of a religion live upto the validity mentioned above, no one can hurt it - either from within or without. Is not the hurt because of insecurity it has created in fundamentalists by revealing the cotradictions?

Once born in some religion, does not have to confine to it even if his or her ideas or reasoning does not convince him to do that? Does not such a system presume and encourage non-thinking or set-pattern thinking individuals? Is it not horrid to call some one heretic or apostate just because the person thinks differently and says so? Is it not the extreme arrogance and erroneous presumption on the part of the defenders of that particular faith that every other faith except theirs is inferior just because they are born into it and not because the physical. moral and spiritual conditions of followers of other

faith is in any way lower than theirs? It was horrifying to read that the Prophet on his return to Mecca had ordered in all seventeen executions for apostasy. I am sure Rafig Zakaria has made a mistake in attributing this fact to P. ophet. I am sure no Prophet would ever agree to taking somebody's life, no matter what the crime. Very recently in the national media, including Mainstream there were articles against death penalty, as it defeats the whole purpose of punishment for reformation. Many civilised countries have abolished And to believe that someone is beyond reformation is to deny the inherent goodness or dignity of life itself. History is filled with cases as to how dangerous criminals reformed themselves both by external help and by self reflection. Had their lives been taken away where was the chance for their reformation. Would not it also be denying the responsible sociological and psychological variables as lot of case studies have revealed.

Rafiq Zakaria is outraged by certain perception and projection of Muslims especially by the West. He quoted Norman Daniel - on the notion the West has of Muslims '- ".....Muslims were believed to continue cruel, violent, lascivious and hypocritical". What does one make out of a game played in some Muslim countries including Afghanistan, a game played on horses with live goat used as a ball and also it being a very popular game with lots of people coming to watch?

What about the sexual self-indulgence of men from these nations especially the Middle East?

How is it that women are so insecure in these countries? Not only Indian girls who cannot think of travelling these countries alone, even Western girls feel the same. How come this reputation has come to stick? Is there ever any smoke without any fire? Mind you, I am talking about also the countries where the set of prayers are performed by everyone as regulated by the state. Is it not cruel to amputate limbs for punishment?

Is it not cruel to make someone handicapped for

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life? It is indeed a most cruel Designed by Arya Samaj Foundation Countaging francticism and violence in the name of Is not the rule of evidence of two women being religion. And recent events have amply proved that

equal to one man disgusting and repulsive by any civilised standards? Where have the Muslim men proved themselves superior to their women — in contributing to society in any sphere of life, not to speak of them vis a vis men from other nations, following different sets of faith?

Zakaria also asserted that there are hardly any instances of Muslim rulers having executed heretics and that some might have destroyed temples. Is he not familiar with Indian history, where not only temples and monastries were destroyed on a big scale, besides Hindu priests many Buddhist nuns and

monks were killed?

Now coming to Imam Khomeini, to whom Muslim fundamentalists look upto is he not responsible for the massacre of millions, all in the name of religion, both internally for dissension and externally in Iran-Iraq war? Though some fundamentalists, blind to all realities, claim all the blame lies with Iraq. Has he stopped his followers from carrying his pictures around their neck as it is against tenets of Islam? Of course not because he is first of all a politician,

religion. And recent events have amply proved that that to weaken moderates and to strengthen his and his son's position he took this very belated step against Salman Rushdie for his book.

Rafiq Zakaria tried to justify the heinous and contemptible call by any civilised standards, to execute Rushdie, by comparing it with the instances where the Western leaders got undesirable people exterminated in the Third World. Though killing of any kind is condemnable, but killing for religion is works as it reveals the hollowness of that particular religi ous philosophy. Is not waging war in the name of religon (crusades) a contradiction in itself? To kill human beings in the name of religion is to forget that religion is made for human beings and not human beings for religion. Religion should arouse human brotherhood and not hatred, war, fanaticism and narrowmindedness. A true religion for human beings should be universally applicable and should be theoretically sound both in terms of time and space.

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April 6, 1989

Dhawan: Groundwater Resources

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of costs must be borne in mind. We are adding half a million electric pumpsets every year. While the farmer bears its installation cost of about Rs. 7000 (much of it financed from institutional sources) energisation of each pumpset through rural electrification programme (not counting the investment in electricity generation) may be as much as Rs 20,000. Secondly, groundwater protagonists blithely ignore two facts: (1) higher operational costs of groundwater irrigation; and (2) smaller life of the investments like pumpsets and tubewells. Thirdly, as a result of gross underpricing of electricity for rural pumps the reported operational cost of electric pumpsets/tubewells needs an upward adjustment. My hunch is that the true cost advantage, if any, may be with major surface irrigation works, and not groundwater irrigation.

Factually, the productivity argument is certainly in favour of groundwater. The source of the advantage stems from the difference in ownership of the two modes of irrigation. Adequacy of irrigation is a prime determinant of input intensification in modern farming based on HYV seeds having rather exacting water requirements at critical stages of plant growth. Evidently, farmers can intensify their farming much more when they own their water sources than when they depend on a public irrigation system whose uncertainties of water supply are rather high, especially for farmers located in the tail reaches of a canal network. While the productivity differential in favour of wells and tubewells cannot be wholly eliminated in Indian conditions, better management of public canals and tanks can certainly reduce it considerably.

Here, one must not forget the beneficial external effects of canals and tanks on wells and tubewells in

the low rainfall regions. But for the investment in percolation tanks, returns to investments in private dugwells irrigation (on the downstream side) would be much lower than reported in survey data. In the Mula Project command, the seeped-in canal waters not only enlarged the scope for establishing more dugwells but also boosted up the magnitude of the rate of return by a factor of four. The much acclaimed groundwater irrigation of the western Indo-Gangetic plains is being greatly sustained by seepage of waters released into the extensive canal network of the region. But for such seepage the tubewell explosion in this region would have either occurred on a smaller scale, or would have led to serious depletion in groundwater like the one witnessed in northern Gujarat.

Groundwater resource is naturally much less bountiful than surfacewater resource. In low rainfall regions, hardly one-fourth of the irrigation potential can be tapped from natural groundwater sources. Here, man-made efforts in developing canals and tanks provide a key to the development of a productive, stable and sustainable groundwater-based agriculture. For, these surface water works act as powerful instruments of artificial groundwater replenishment. Because of this linkage, one should not neglect surface irrigation works on grounds of lower returns.

If at all any special emphasis is needed on developing groundwater over surface irrigation works it is in the east Gangetic plains. Because of small and fragmented landholdings here the intrinsic economic logic is in favour of public tubewells, and not private tubewells. Unless the management inpublic tubewell irrigation here improve sharply in public tubewell irrigation here improve sharply the groundwater resource here will remain largely untapped — and pace of rural transformation below par.

Foreign Direct Investment in ESCAP Nations

SUBHASH CHANDRA SARKER

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THE Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 1988, just issued by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), devotes a chapter to a discussion on the foreign direct investment (FDI) in the developing countries of the region, including India and China. The account shows that in the latter half of the seventies the annual flow of FDI into the ESCAP nations was US \$ 2007 million which rose to \$ 4817 million per year in the first half of the eighties — the years of economic difficulties for the rich countries. The annual flow of FD1 of \$ 4495 million in 1985 was somewhat smaller than the \$ 4773 million coming as FDI into the region in 1984.

In recent years which developing countries in the ESCAP region received the largest amount of foreign direct investment? The largest importer of FDI during the first half of the eighties was Singapore (§ 1130 million annually), followed by Malaysia (§ 1083 million annually), China (\$ 796 million), Hong Kong (\$ 582 million), Thailand (\$ 280 million), Indonesia (\$ 229tmillion), Taiwan (\$ 189 million), Panua New Guinea (\$ 103 million) Papua New Guinea (\$ 102 million), South Korea (\$ 116 million), Pakistan (\$ 79 million), Philippines (\$ 58 million), Sri Lanka (\$ 43 million), India (\$ 40 million annually), and others. Thus India appeared to have presented a less hospitable climate for the coming of foreign capital into the country than many other developing countries in the region. The most remarkable development is the rise in the flow of foreign direct investment into China. From an average annual flow of \$ 796 million in the first half of the eighties it rose to \$ 1258 million in 1984 and further to \$ 1659 million in 1985. By contrast, India suffered a net loss of foreign capital of \$ 37 million in 1984, while in 1985 the inflow was of a modest of \$ 70 million. In 1986 India received another \$ 89 million by way of FDI.

The principal sources of FDI were the USA and Japan. In the seventies Japan provided a substantial amount of FDI to the developing nations in the ESCAP region but in the eighties the Japanese invector. investment moved largely into the USA and Western

Which were the areas in the developing countries tracting on this attracting foreign capital? Information on this aspect is scanty. According to the Survey, there was acute leading to the Survey, there was acute lack of adequate and comparable data". (p.85) Bulk of the foreign investment was in "service-the new manufactures" and not in the development of the new manufacturing industries which could give added economic countries added economic strength to the recipient countries (of conress in its strength to the recipient countries) (of course it is not reasonable to expect the rich nations of the world which have grown rich by exploiting the world which have grown rich by exploiting the world which have grown the decades suddent resources of the poor nations for decades suddenly to turn benevolent to the extent of sacrificing their national interests by providing economic strength to rich mic strength to the poor nations to supplant the rich

countries; but then that is what many in the poor countries think is going to happen through the import of foreign capital. "The bulk of such investment was in the development and diversification of business infrastructure and facilities - mostly banking and finance, commerce (wholesale and retail trade) and business services (including insurance and real estate)" the Survey reports. (pp 85-86)

A propaganda is raging with increasing frequency - and with it the belief seems to be growing among a wider section of the society in this country - that poverty in India is unnecessarily continuing because enough was not being done by the Government to attract foreign private capital into the country, no matter if in fact there is a law - the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act (FERA) — to facilitate forign private investment in this country, a law that is dangerously liberal in favour of the foreigners coming with capital in this country (a fact that can be verified with reference to the laws in other countries). Since the propagandists for foreign capital in this country are not concerned with facts - even with current facts—it is too much to expect them to be concerned with the history of foreign investment in this country and elsewhere. After all, it is not as if foreign capital has started playing an international role only now.

Indeed the history of the last three hundred years of the world is nothing if not the history of the wreckage caused to the nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America, not to speak of Australia, by foreign capital. Perhaps that history cannot be described in the past tense. The classic example of imperialist exploitation was in the draining away of the primary resources from the poor nations to be converted into manufactured goods to be re-exported back to the developing nations themselves at much higher prices, bringing about pauperisation of the people in the poor nations.

The same practice continues unabated - even with reference to India, which, according to the propaganda, has done well in the field of industrial development. For is this country still not exporting iron ore and importing steel, instead of converting iron ore direct into steel within the country from the iron ore available? Is the country still not exporting manganese ore against all lessons of history? Is the country still not earning much of its export value through the export of agricultural commodities and other raw materials like raw hides and skins? If even then the trade deficit seems to be on the rise that only shows with what reckless abandon the recources of the country are being wasted to line the pockets of foreigners looking for a market for their unsaleable goods: Where else in the world can one find the most eminent business houses of the country embroiled in a controversy with the Government of

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in the country of its origin, in the name of adding to the industrial strength of the country and to build

up its export capacity?

This in essence in the process of "modernisation" of India upon which the most vocal and organised section of the economic community in India has embarked and for which the people are expected to extend their cooperation. This is also the secret why all the sacrifices the people are called upon to make, and do make in practice, go in vain in building up the international economic standing of the country, whose currency is seen to register a virtually continuous fall day after day and month after month, year after year, while the Government of the day can still boast with a lot of approbation from the foreigners and their powerful agents in this country about the' wise' course of economic development followed by it.

The Malaysian Prime Minister, Dr Mahathir Mohammed, cried out a few years ago that the setting up of the export-processing zones by the foreign companies in Malaysia had not led to the technological knowhow getting percolated to the Malaysians because the foreigners did not want to Part with any technological information for use by the Malaysians to build up their economic strength. Is the experience different in India? If the refusal of the foreigners to part with technology to the Indians, even while the foreigners work in India, is not talked about it is not because the foreigners have a soft corner for the Indians and treat the Indians with any better degree of helpfulness than they treat the Malaysians or others. It is because in the variety of democracy practised in India there is very little place

for truth and facts. The process of suppressio ver the day to receive the facility of importing a forty- for truth and facts. The process of suppressio very year old — yes, a forty-year old — plant discarded and Charges and facts are little time to every little time to cal media which has very little time to examine the fundamental factors governing the economic fate of the country, where despite the so-called economic growth employment in the organised industries does not grow and in fact falls in many cases and where for every export the much-harassed tax payer is call. ed upon to subsidise. This is the sort of "growth" which can be expected to receive further incentive from the liberalisation of the import of foreign capital into this country.

What has the country got in the last few years by way of industrial development? Does this country need foreign expertise to develop the financial structure. when India is having the most widespread financial structure among the countries of the world? Can India not be expected instead to be exporting the expertise. only if the Indians are able to overcome the innate feeling of inferiority with the reference to the Westerners, whose incapacity to manage resources is writ large in the continuation of unemployment and doles for the unemployed in country after country having very large average per capita national income? Does this country need more ice creams, toothpastes, cosmetics, soft drinks, automobiles to be produced with foreign capital when there is no road to carry the existing ones and in the process travel becomes more time-consuming and harassing and economically more hurting to the poorer sections of the society who have to lose time in travel from home to workplace and back only because the roads are cluttered up by unmoving transport, as is the daily experience of those who have to travel for work?

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S.C.: Commentary

(Contd. from page 5)

actually enhanced from March 5 this year, were

fundamentally wrong."

Basically all such assumptions fail to take into account the power of the people, emancipated from the voke of tyranny and oppression, ignorance and obscurantism. The PDPA definitely had its weakneses, internal bickerings, adventurism and reformism that had doubtless undermined the gains of the 1978 Yet the Saur (April) Revolution of Revolution. 1978 did achieve something: it injected a sense of self-confidence in the minds of a newly emergent people. This self-confidence had remained invisible in the nine years of Soviet presence in Afghanistan. Today it has come out in sharp relief in the wake of the mujuhideen's failure to break the backbone of the Najibullah Government. Another fact has also been conclusively proved in the proces: that PDPA administration did not represent a puppet rule. Had it been so, it would have collapsed much earlier,

Dr Najibullah's maturity too needs to be brought into focus in this context. In the face of strong pressure from some of his military colleagues for a strategic offensive into Pakistan in the light of the latter's direct intervention in Afghanistan (which is indisputable, although its scale has yet to reach staggering proportions) the Afghan President has

rejected any such step at this stage. However, it is quite plain that in case Islamabad decides to further escalate the civil war with largescale induction of its regular reserves (who are already fighting alongside the mujahideen) such an eventuality cannot be ruled out. Yet there is no gainsaying that Dr Najibullah has displayed remarkable restraint in this respect.

One year ago, this writer had concluded an analysis of the Geneva Accords with the following

'For anyone striving to reinforce peace, security and stability in our region, the Geneva Accords provide a new ray of hope strengthened by personal ties of the stature of Gorbachev and Dr Najibullah

Even if the constant violation of the Geneva Accords by the Pak military circles and the Pentagon wing of the US military industrial complex has resulted in aggravation of the armed confrontation in Afghanistan, the Accords remain the only ray of hope for peace in that battle-scarred and warravaged country. Hence the undiminished validity of the observation a year later as Afghanistan celebrates the eleventh anniversary of the Saur Revolution of April 27 amid mounting confidence in the PDPA's capability not only to survive but also to fight back and deal heavy by and deal heavy blows on the jehad mongering fundamentalists. The mentalists. The overall significance of such a development for our residual significance of such a development ment for our region as a whole can hardly be overestimated. [(April 26)

GLASNOST GLEANINGS.

On Lenin's Political Testament

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April 22, 1989 happened to be V.I. Lenin's 119th birth anniversary. To mark the occasion this article, reproduced from the Russian journal, Azia i Afrika Segodnya (Asia and Africa Foday), brings out the current analysis of Lenin's works in the USSR. The author is a Candidate of Sciences (History). - Editor

THE letters and articles which Lenin dictated from December 1922 to March 1923 hold a special place among his works. Common to them is their subject and a feeling that they are a kind of Lenin's political testament. In 1929; Nikolai Bukharin made a report at the meeting held in connection with the fifth anniversary of Lenin's death. The speaker noted that Lenin's last works, "Pages from a Diary", "Our Revolution", "How We Should Reorganise the Workers and Peasants' Inspection", "Better Fewer, But Better" and "On Cooperation", were "not separate pieces, but the components of a major plan of Lenin's strategy and tactics, developed on the basis of clear-cut prospects". Nikolai Bukharin noted that although Lenin's works had been thoroughly studied and very often cited by speakers, no one had tried to analyse those last works of Lenin in their inter-connection.

While discussing Lenin's works with a view to showing his plan in its entirety, Bukharin did not mention such major documents at "Letter to the Congress", "Granting Legislative Functions to the State Planning Commission", and "The Question of Nationalities or 'Autonomisation'". Moreover, the main point is that classical works, works by the classical Marxist philosophers among them, remain of eternal importance, because each generation sees them in its own light. Hence the continuity in the cause, carried on by generations.

It would be naive to try to analyse the whole of Lenin's political testament in all its aspects. That would require a tremendous amount of historical information. The difficulties of a researcher are further aggravated by the fact that the composition of Leninger avaited by the fact that the composition of Lenin's Political testament is elaborate. It contains letters to Party leaders, articles for the press, entries in dia Party leaders, articles for the press, entries in diaries. And Lenin touched upon many problems of most diverse fields.

The great effort spent on the historical and methodological analysis of Lenin's last works is fully rewarded analysis of Lenin's last works is fully tewarded when a researcher comes to see that those Works have remained up-to date.

connection with research into the socialist orientation in developing countries, I shall dwell on the most important aspects. Today, discussions about the prospects of socialist orientation in developing countries usually centre on one main problem: the best possible policy of socialism-oriented reforms in a multi-structure under developed national economy, with independent small-scale producers prevalent among the population. In the most general terms, this problem is in the centre of Lenin's political testament. However, a direct analogy between multistructure Soviet Russia and multi-structure African and Asian countries is methodologically unacceptable and anti-historical. Therefore, there is only one way of applying the ideas 'set forth in Lenin's last works to the study of orientation towards socialism today: to reveal and to formulate (in the language of the eighties not the twenties) the logic of a fundamental revision of the viewpoint of socialism to which Lenin called towards the end of his life.

There can be several approaches to this task, each of them supplementing others. For instance, Lenin's political testament in its integrity can be reconstructed through an analysis of the vitally important aspects of the problem of nationalities. Or, one can analyse Lenin's plan of cooperation, with its goal of showing the economic and social potential of the peasantry, the overwhelming majority of the Russian working people, in the conditions of free work on the land placed at their disposal. The approach suggested in this article is connected with the analysis of another aspect, also of fundamental importance; the political will of a State oriented towards socialism and the meaning of the socialist ideal itself.

Lenin's last letters and articles are permeated with his constant care for the strength and stability of the Communist Party, the ruling Party in our country. Lenin considered that question of paramount importance just as the personal qualities, of, and differences between Party leaders. Inner-party relations were not the only area of Lenin's attention here. He further developed that subject in his analysis of the two interdependent aspects of the state-WHILE analysing Lenin's pelitical testament in This is very important for the following reason.

MAD:

MAINSTREAM April 29, 1989

Perhaps the first of the Marxists who analysed the state from that point of view. Lenin revealed a contradiction serving as a motive force for a state, in general and specifically, for a state-oriented towards secialist reforms. I mean the contradiction between political power (as an expression of the class foundation of a state) and the apparatus of a state.

There appeared a new type of state in multi-structural Soviet Russia. In 1921, with the resolute turn towards a New Economic Policy, there became apparent the social foundations of the state, as the one of workers and peasants. Lenin noted, time and again, that the apparatus of that state was "pretty bad" and "still quite alien to us". It thus, manifested a contradiction between the two sides of the state: fundamental (class) and structural (bureaucratic). Lenin considered that this contradiction could become very acute and bring about some situations when, instead of a controlled body, the government apparatus would become a controlling body. To Lenin, that was tantamount to nullifying the political desire of reforms and to a degeneration of a new government system. It was most important to find an opportunity for the above-mentioned contradiction to be resolved. Lenin found such an opportunity in a changed correlation between the direct coercion by the state and its indirect influence on social processes.

What did Lenin consider new in the type of government organisation in the five-year-old Soviet Russia of the NEP period? He saw that new feature in the proletarian character of political power. To be more exact, in the anti-bourgeois nature of the state ruled by a political bloc, with the working class as the political leader. ("...the workers are leading the peasants against the bourgeoisie ..."— Lenin). That bloc pattern of the government and political system had been brought about by the NEP. Hence the repudiation of the policy of War Communism which equated the general planned distribution and control function of the state with socialisation as such.

Through the NEP prospect, Lenin saw the bloc nature of the power of workers and peasants by no means as a temporary, transitional stage in compulsory changing peasants from the class of petty independent owners into a different social group. In his political testament. Lenin discussed the government bloc of workers and peasants from the viewpoint of a long-term earnest agreement between the two classes, with each retaining class originality.

In a nutshell, government and political will was no longer regarded as the self-sufficing principle of revolutionary reforms. It depended on agreement between the two classes of working people, with one of them of proletarian nature and the other retaining its dual nature of the class of working people and petty private owners. Lenin's idea was new in principle. Moreover, this type of multi-structure economy envisages the existence not only of commodity production, but also private-capitalist production and state-capitalist production (with certain restrictions). Therefore, this basic delineation of the social system is reflected in all its aspects, national question, "etc. CC-0. In Public Domain. Gurukul Kangri Collection, Transwar.

And Lenin writes that this social system is based on the collaboration of two classes, in which the bourgeoisle, "is now permitted to participate on certain terms."

In Russia, the bourgeoisie was overthrown and expropriated. In this context, the statement about collaboration between the main ruling classes of working people and the bourgeoisie looks contradictory. But, first, it was really existing contradiction of development brought about by the grown complication of the multistructural social pattern of Russia in 1917 to 1922. Secondly, that contradiction, without a simple or obvious political settlement, encouraged a philosopher or a politician to abandon the field of politics and to touch upon the most extensive field of culture.

According to Lenin, the main condition under which the bourgeoisie could, and was to be permitted to government cooperation with the two clases of working people was participation in cultural and civilising activities. By laying down that condition. the government of workers and peasants thus recognised that it was impossible to act for the bourgeoisie in its historical civilising role, and at the same time, through the NEP, restricted the growth of the bourgeoisie as an entity of exploiters. In this context... Lenin formulated the fundamental problems of the new revolutionary government, as those of policy and culture at the same time. Such is the the pivot of all of Lenin's works written in the last years of his life. So, he wrote not about culture existing side by side with policy, like an "appendage" to coercion, but a culture of socialist reforms as a policy of the state of working people.

While dwelling on the cultural revolution, Lenin resisted the people "dilating at too great length and too flippantly on 'proletarian' culture'. Lenin saw culture as a field of activity with a high degree of inertia, unamendable to any attempts to "proletarise", or reform it by a volitional political effort, and even in the periods of fundamental social reforms calling for a clear-cut differentiation between "what can be done in five years, and what requires much more time".

Three major trends are seen in Lenin's idea of the cultural revolution, as it is set forth in his political testament. They are: total literacy, the neutralisation of "the cruder types of pre-bourgeois culture", and the concentration, among the highest political leaders and the government apparatus, of "a staff of workers really abrest of the times, that is, not inferior to the best West-European standards."

No revolution can erase the past from the memory or the practice of people. The past resisted by revolution, "has been overthrown" but has not yet been "overcome". And it weighs on the activities of revolutionaries and reformers. From this point of view (the past as a historical burden inevitably con taining coercion used for many centuries), Lening analysed the most seed for many centuries), analysed the most complicated problem of relations among nations within a multi-national state. from this point of view, Lenin revealed and explained the essence of "the real proletarian attitude to the national question".

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prea tion dist state According to Lenin, nothing but culture would help settle the main contradiction of policy in the help settle the main contradiction between two state of a new type, the contradiction between two sides of the state: the worker-and-peasant social active of the government and its apparatus of state nature of the task of raising the cultural level power. Hence the task of raising the cultural level of the state apparatus. The second task of similar of the state apparatus contacts between town and importance is to establish contacts between town and country, seen as an all-out assistance to the cultural development of the countryside and resistance to that aspect of capitalist influence on it, which "—introduced political, economic, moral, physical etc, corruption into the countryside".

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With the numerical prevalence of small-scale producers in Russia, Lenin regarded the establishment of new relations between the town and the countryside as "gigantic, historic-cultural task in all its magnitude". The major importance of that task was due to Russia being "on the border-line" between the Western world and the Eastern world, and due to the fact that long before his associates Lenin had seen most clearly that in its development, East would largely refute the calculations of "the European philistines" of socialism. Lenin wrote about the establishment of such contacts between the town and the countryside, which would greatly encourage progress and would exclude the expropriation of small-scale producers. Lenin considered it a revolutionary task of world importance. To counterbalace any speculations and the idea of socialism as a homogeneous society, there was developed an idea of socialism as a civic society with socialised contacts on the basis of its original and encouraged multiformity

Lenin's idea of socialism for Soviet Russia, the then economically backward multi-structure country, was an alternative to War Communism, to the naive romantic dreams about the realm of general weal, and to the West-European yardstick of development. What was the basis of Lenin's idea? What were its practical prerequisites? Lenin's letters and articles of December 1922-March 1923 contain the answer. According to Lenin, when there appears a new type of state and when in the struggle against the danger spelt by the government apparatus, the state retains and protects its worker-peasant type solely through the organisation of the population in cooperative societies, (with a civilised cooperator as the main figure of a new social system) "...the socialism which in the past was legitimately treated with ridicule, scorn and contempt by those who were rightly convinced that it was necessary to wage the class struggle, the struggle for political power, etc, will achieve its aim automatically"

Lenin suggested an idea that by developing the principle of organising the population in cooperative into class collaborators and class war into class peace (class truce)".

Lenin wrote those things after the acutest crisis and tion of War Communism, the abortive abolidistribution private property by the centralised and stateless communist system by state-organised coer-

cion. At that historical stage, a new understanding of a socialist ideal called for the entirely new forms, and the new essence of the system to be created. That manifested itself in the shifting of the main emphasis of entire socialist activities from the sphere of policy, political power, the class struggle, etc., to "peaceful, organisational, 'cultural' work''. To make that shifting real, Lenin outlined two main tasks "which constitute the epoch". The first was to raise the cultural level of "our machinery of state", which he said "is utterly useless" in the sense that it was utterly unfit for managing the state affairs, and obsessed with the insatiable desire to suppress everything original from the national, social and cultural point of view. The second was "educational work among the peasants. And the economic object of this educational work among the peasants is to organise the latter in cooperative societies," Lenin noted.

The subjects of Lenin's letters and articles are: the state, cooperative producers, workers' control, the education of politicians and working people, economic development, socialism as a social goal. And one sees a clear and complete picture from the outwardly fragmentary observations and comments. They have nothing to do with some rigid "theory", or a scientific dogma of some "criterion of truth" type. They are suggestions, not instructions.

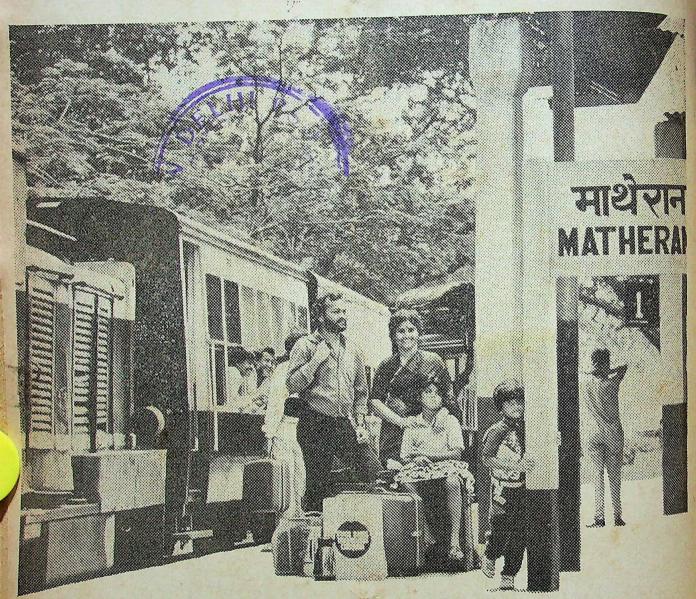
Only if we treat Lenin's letters and articles of that time this way shall we be able to use Lenin's conclusions for an analysis of the problems connected with orientation towards socialism in the developing countries of our day. In Lenin's works, one should not look for a ready "pattern" of the development of socialism in multi-structure countries with underdeveloped economies, but some principles useful to any socialist in those countries.

The desire to develop socialism in some country on the basis of its social opportunities is orientation towards the social, cultural and political activity of the masses of working people. And socialism will liberate their energy, after centuries-old suppression and isolation. Lenin refutes the primitive treatment of socialism as a canon. He rejects the claims of the doctrinarians of socialism to foresee "all the forms of development of subsequent world history."

Lenin noted that socialism envisaged a choice of ways for development. There should be a choice between the coercion of a state system, on the conscientious self-restraint of hand, and political will, on the other. There centralised political will, on the other. There should be a choice between the establishment of state control over economic contacts and their socialisation within the national scope (which possible only when the attitude of every working man towards the means of his labour as his own is kept up and further developed). There should be a choice between a pre-planned future for all members of society and a developed and encouraged multiformity of the ways of life, which needs new political forms for the life of people. Today, the prospects of socialism in the developing countries as well as the whole world depend on the consciousness and will of those who will be aware of this choice and its necessity for our time.

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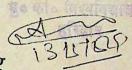
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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Boomerang



A FTER the Congress-I chorus having hailed the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana as if it is going to set off a revolution in the countryside, one can discern a more sober appraisal of the new measure ceremonially launched by Rajiv Gandhi with great fanfare.

While the time-honoured maxim that one must not look at a gift horse in the mouth still holds good, many including the more sensible Congressmen do not seem to be excited over it while the cynics call it as one more election season stunt. The amount allocated (Rs 2100 crores) is not so massive as it is made out to be. The Finance Minister in his Budget speech had allocated Rs 500 crores for this very project, while as per the Prime Minister's statement, it will absorb other employment-oriented items in the existing antipoverty programmes, which themselves account for Rs 1300 crores. The Kerala Chief Minister is not alone in apprehending that the new measure might actually amount to slicing down the allocations for the existing programmes, apart from trying to bypass the State Governments. The Prime Minister's promise that 30 per cent of the beneficiaries would be women is not much of an advance, as the available data show that 25 per cent of the beneficiaries from the existing anti-poverty programmes are women.

Apart from the funding of the new scheme, the new Jawahar Yojana will provide employment for only two or three months in a year — a sort of a distress relief scheme, falling far short of any employment guarantee scheme. Besides, those familiar with the rural scene in many parts of the country have the fear that the rural rich who are likely to dominate the panchayats outside the islands of active peasant movement, will decide who should get jobs and who should be left out. At many places, this may turn out to be worse than

the present contractor-bureaucrat regime.

In this context, the second part of this populist drive will be launched by the legislation to be brought immediately before Parliament for amending the panchayat system. However, the more hard-headed among politicians of different parties including the Congress-I, are worried about these grassroot bodies being captured by the rural rich — through muscle power and other forms of duress — except where the Left is strong. It is worth noting that all the farmers' agitations whether by Sharad Joshi or Tikait are bound to facilitate the domination of the rural rich in the panchayats wherever these are strong. And within the Congress-I too, the farmers' lobby is very strong — vide Balram Jakhar and his counterpart in various States — and so too is it in the Opposition, witness Devi Lal, NTR, not to speak of the late Charan Singh. Decentralisation of power without a change in the balance of forces in the countryside can make a mockery of grassroot democracy.

RAJIV GANDHI has thus launched his election campaign with the toppling of the Janata Dal Ministry in Karnataka and the high-cc-0 powered propagation and the

Panchayati Raj. It is only to be expected that many more populist missiles will be fired in the weeks and months ahead. The underdog is always cultivated in the election season, since the underdog forms the largest contingent in a democratic electorate. It is not without significance that various demands of employees engaged in Government-managed enterprises are being quickly met in this season, without much concern about inflationary consequences.

Adlai Stevenson once said that on the eve of an election contest, even the most conservative turns a liberal, from which Prof Galbrieth coined the phrase "the Liberal Hour" -- representing an election-eve season to cultivate the voter. In our case, a touch of radicalism becomes the order of the day. Indira Gandhi had perfected it into a fine art, culminating in her lightning pie-in-the-sky slogan of Garibi Hatao. Rajiv has already begun to turn friendly to the working class, even praising its labours in the public sector, as could be noticed in his May Day speech at Bhilai.

More interesting is his occasional gestures to the Left, as could be seen in his praise of the panchayats functioning in West Bengal at his recent Bangalore speech which was laced with attacks on the functioning of the panchayats in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. In reality, the Karnataka panchayat experiment received encomium even from the loyalist Doordarshan not very long ago. Incidentally, two days later, the Prime Minister changed his tune in his Ahmedabad address on May 2, in which he praised the functioning of the panchayats in Andhra and Karnataka as well - a typical example of his shifting assessments.

What is actually amusing is Rajiv's rather pathetic effort to dislink the Left from the Janata Dal which has become his main target of attack. However, this shows a high degree of naivette in the Rajiv establishment, as his four-year record as Prime Minister has done the maximum damage to the economic model of self-reliance that the Left has throughout upheld. Perhaps more than anything else, what has really distanced Rajiv Gandhi from the Left is his come-hither approach to the transnational corporations, along with profligacy in squandering hard-earned foreign exchange reserves bringing the country to the threshold of a debt trap. The Pepsicola deal and the yielding to Washington's pressure on the intellectual property issue are two recent measures which many even in the Congress-I find difficult to support, not to speak of the Left.

OUITE a few in the high-society circle in New Delhi dismiss the issue of corruption as of little consequence, saying that that it has hardly any political fall-out. In a sense, this is a variant of Indira Gandhi's rather infamous statement that corruption is a global phenomenon. Judging by the avid interest with which the public all over the country have followed the unfolding of the Recruit scandal in Japan leading to the resignation of Prime Minister Takeshita and the suicide of his aide, one can hardly

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGangotriors kickback scandal will have be expected that many claim that the Bolors kickback scandal will have be expected that many impact whatsoever on the electorate. The Rain Government may have so far managed to stall open indictment but the public impression by and large has been that the Government exercise so is including the management of the Joint Parliamentan Committee has only been a gigantic whiteward operation, not really investigation.

As part of the same drive against the Opposition has come the move to implicate Arun Nehru in the Czech pistol deal through the pliant CBI, but Are Nehru's response has come as a boomerang for the Rajiv establishment counter-implicating Quattrochi a familiar figure who by all accounts has established a rather much-too-familiar rapport with the Print Minister's inner circle. Almost simultaneously has come the exposure of unsavoury deals associated with Home Minister Buta Singh and also with the mini-Home Minister Chidambaram, while door ments have appeared implicating Balram Jakhar which is a serious reflection on the conduct of one occupying the august seat of the Speaker of the Lok Sabha. Together with these worthies, another to attract the spotlight is Satish Sharma, a Raji buddy who has so long been operating as the Print Minister's trusted aide involved in many subject both political and financial, but keeping a low pro file. As a desperate counter-attack from the Cong ress-I has come the charge that some of the Janan Dal leaders were found hobnobbing with a here smuggler.

All this signifies that whether anybody likes it " not, corruption is going to figure rather prominent in the poll polemics of this year.

May 3

Voice of India

"Typical of India as Tagore was, yet he was typical also of the wide world today, as well as of the world of tomorrow. He showed us how India might be intensely national and yet, at the same time, international with her thought and sympathy embracing the world. In the midst of our national struggle, he created that symbol

"Standing on the edge of a precipice, as we all do today, my mind goes back to that great and magnificent message which Countries are the contributions of the countries are t message which Gurudev gave to his country and the world on his eightieth birthday. That was his last will and testament. Out of the store of his rich mind with experience, he gave that Gral or his rich mind with experience, he gave that final message. In line with the ancient sages and great men of India, he spoke to us of our country's and great men of India, he spoke to us of our country's and great men of India, he spoke to use the sages and great men of India, he spoke to use the sages and great men of India, he spoke to use the sages and great men of India, he spoke to use the sages and great men of India, he spoke to use the sages and great men of India, he spoke to use the sages and great men of India, he spoke to use the sages and great men of India, he spoke to use the sages and great men of India, he spoke to use the sages and great men of India, he spoke to use the sages and great men of India, he spoke to use the sages and great men of India, he spoke to use the sages and great men of India, he spoke to use the sages and great men of India, he spoke to use the sages and great men of India, he spoke to use the sages and great men of India, he spoke to use the sages and great men of India, he spoke to use the sages and great men of India, he spoke to use the sages and great men of India, he spoke to use the sages are the sages and great men of India, he spoke to use the sages are the sages and great men of India, he sages are the sages are the sages and great men of India, he sages are the sa us of our country's sorrow at the crisis that had over taken civilisation in the Western world. As I read the message in prison it was a likely to the country to the count message in prison it seemed to me that I heard be voice of India herself whispering in my ears. that message comes beat the property of the company of the c that message comes back to me and that lesson imprinted in my mind. It were well if all of us, in Asia or Europe or America, poid to well if all of us, in being or Europe or America, paid heed to it for we are swept away by the passions of the moment, and wath that great falsifier, is perverting and degrading out.

(A message on the death anniversell of Tagore, August 7, 1942)

(Rabindranath Tagore's 128th birth anniversary falls on Monday)

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Kampuchea: Path to Peace

C. RAJA MOHAN

This article was written before some of the latest developments in and around Kampuchea—that is, the decision of Prince Norodom Sihanouk, the Kampuchean resistance leader, to drop his demand for an UN Peace Keeping Force in Kampuchea to oversee the pull-out of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea; the decision of the Government of Kampuchea to change the country's name (from the 'People's Republic of Kampuchea' to the 'State of Cambodia'), national flag, anthem, and coat of arms; and the highly fruitful meeting that Prince Sihanouk held with Hun Sen, the Kampuchean Premier, in Jakarta on May 2-3, 1989. These developments have imparted a further momentum to the peace process in Kampuchea that was set in motion as a result of Hanoi's farsighted initiatives which the author, a Research Fellow in the Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi, has dwelt with at length in the article. - Editor

By announcing the unilateral and unconditional withdrawal of its troops from Kampuchea, Vietnam has come out on top of the rapidly evolving international diplomacy over Kampuchea. Paradoxically, this "final concession" by Hanoi has expanded the manoeuvring room for the Hun Sen Government in Kampuchea and forced the Kampuchean rebel factions onto the defensive. The Vietnamese move has also confronted the chief patrons of the rebels — China and the United States — with some awkward policy choices. If the prospects for ending the tragic decade-long civil war in Kampuchea have at last brightened, it is also quite evident that in the post-Kampuchean phase, international relations in Asia will never be the same again.

There has been a widespread perception that the Vietnamese moves on Kampuchea are the result of the pressure exerted by the Soviet President, Mikhail Gorbachev, on Hanoi. The argument is that in his search for a quick rapprochement with China, the Soviet leader has been arm-twisting the Vietnamese to vacate Kampuchea. between Moscow and Hanoi in their approach to Differences China have been quite open and visible. They date back to 1981-82, when the then Soviet President, Brezhnev, set out to normalise relations with the post-Mao China. The intensity of the Sino-Viet-namese hostility made Hanoi wary of the consequences of Sino-Vietquences of a Sino-Soviet rapprochement. Over the last two years, however, Moscow and Hanoi have apparently differences, apparently succeeded in minimising their differences, and conducted conducted offenand conducted a well-coordinated diplomatic offensive on Kampuchea. In a remarkable achievement, the Soviet III: the Soviet Union and Vietnam have transformed the Kampuchen Peace in Kampuchean problem into an asset. kampuchea has been the theme around which they have successfully pursued improved relations with most countries in the region.

Although the Soviet Union has wood Beijing the the Soviet Union has wood Beijing since the early 1980s, it was Gorbachev who

gave a new impetus to that effort. However, Gorbachev has sought to make this Chinese overture part of a larger vision of recasting Asian relations towards a more a cooperative framework. In a seminal speech at Vladivostok in July 1986, he unveiled his Asian offensive by calling for an end to regional conflicts, de-escalation of great power military confrontation through arms reductions, and open-ended economic cooperation across the ideological barriers in Asia. The main objective of the new Asian initiative is to break the powerful anti-Soviet coalition in Asia built so successfully by the United States since the late 1970s.

The weak link of this coalition has been China, which became the natural focus of Gorbachev's Vladivostok, At Gorbachev policy. announced the first troop withdrawals from Afghanistan and a new Soviet negotiating position on the border dispute with China. He also announced the initiation of Soviet troop reductions in Mongolia. The subsequent Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, progress in the Sino-Soviet border talks and the unilateral Soviet troop cuts on the Chinese border have eliminated two of the three "obstacles" to full normalisation of Sino-Soviet relations named by

On Kampuchea, the third obstacle, Gorbachev said at Vladivostok that "much depends on the normalisation of Sino-Vietnamese relations". It was a position that reassured Hanoi that Moscow would not bargain away the Vietnamese interest in Indochina in dealing with Beijing. For Gorbachev, Kampuchea would be one of the main routes towards a communist rapprochement in Asia. It was a strategy to end the prolonged antagonism among the three socialist giants of Asia - China, Vietnam and the Soviet Union.

By the mid 1980s, Vietnam too had come to reassess the domestic and international costs of a continuing military presence in Kampuchea,

MAINSTREAM May 6, 1989

to change course was compelling. At the Sixth Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam held at the end of 1986, the Vietnamese leadership opted for a programme of economic reform, loosening state control over agriculture and encouraging foreign investment. Ending the involvement in Kampuchea was recognised as the key to accelerated national reconstruction in Vietnam, participation in the Asian economic boom, opening a new window to the West

and ending Vietnam's isolation.

The Kampuchean Government led by Sen also set out on a course of economic, social and political reform at home designed to maximise domestic political support, define an independent Kampuchean personality and shed the image of being a "puppet" of Vietnam. Hun Sen restored land to the peasants, expanded the area of private economic activity and opened the economy to greater foreign economic interaction. He also restored the Buddhist faith which is central to the Kampuchean cultural identity. The reforms revived the nationalist sense in Kampuchea, enhanced the credibility of the Government and gave the people a new stake in the fight to keep the despised Pol Pot clique out.

The change of direction within Vietnam and Kampuchea helped Hanoi and Phnom Penh to pursue a purposeful and imaginative diplomatic offensive to end the civil war. At the end of 1987, Hun Sen opened direct negotiations with Prince Sihanouk, head of the Kampuchean rebel coalition, in Paris. Multilateral negotiations involving the Hun Sen Government, the three rebel factions (one led by Prince Sihanouk, one by Son Sann, and the third the dreaded Khmer Rouge led by the Pol Pot clique) and the Vietnamese have been held twice (July 1988 and February 1989) at the initiative of the Indonesians in Jakarta. The Vietnamese eschewed their objective of a federation between Vietnam, Kampuchea and Laos, and regularly announced troop withdrawal from Kampuchea. In January, they announced a firm plan to recall all troops by the end of 1990, and even earlier, by September 1989, in the event of a political settlement. The Soviet Union, while engaging China in a dialogue on Kampuchea, quietly sought to internationalise the resolution of the conflict by taking it up with the United States, France, Britain and India, thus constraining the Chinese attempts to settle the issue as part of Sino-Soviet normalisation.

The flexible approach pursued by Moscow, Hanoi and Phnom Penh has had a number of significant consequences. One is the generation of tension within the coalition of the Kampuchean rebel factions. The tragicomic flip-flops by the quixotic Prince Sihanouk - his resignation as the head of the coalition after meeting Hun Sen only to resume the position later under the pressure of the Chinese - served at once to discredit the Prince and

expose the cleavages within the coalition.

Secondly, the apparent certainty of the withdrawal of the Vietnamese forces from Kampuchea has forced international attention on the danger of the return of the Khmer Rouge, whose genocidal rule over Kampuchea during 1975-78 led to the death of

Vietnamese economy was a chamble sand the reed dation of the 1980s which whipped up and Sovietism globally and projected the image of Vietnamese threat to Asia numbed the moral sense in the West and its friends in the Third World into accepting the Khmer Rouge as a legitimate representative of the Kampuchean people. Throughout the last decade the Khmer Rouge has provided the military muscle for the rebel coalition. Notwith standing the Chinese efforts to burnish the image of the Khmer Rouge and present Khieu Samphan as a moderate (a decent maniae!) substitute for Pol Pot, the Khmer Rouge is now facing disconcerting international scrutiny. To think that it is capable of repentance and change of heart is only wishful, as the continuing brutalities in the Khmer Rouge camps in Thailand would show. There is growing body of opinion in the United States and the West which now insists on an "anyone but

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Khmer Rouge" solution.

Thirdly, the Kampuchean diplomacy of Moscow, Hanoi and Phnom Penh has broken through the solid front maintained by the nations of ASEAN on the Kampuchean issue for more than a decade. The ASEAN, comprising Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand the Philippines, Brunei and Singapore, has led the international campaign against Vietnam on the Kampuchean issue. The civil war in Kampuchea did make it appear that the strategic tension between "pro-Soviet" Indo-Chinese states and the "pro-Western" ASEAN made for a permanent cleavage in Asia. However, even at the height of the antiand Vietnamese campaign, Indonesia sought to pursue a softer and conciliatory stance of towards Vietnam. The public, rhetorical stance of Indonesia emphasising the Soviet and Vietnames threat could not entirely conceal its real private threat perceptions which were focussed on China Jakarta saw Vietnam as a bulwark against Chines ambitions in South-East Asia. It is not surprising then that Indonesia has acted as an honest broket in the Kampucdean peace process.

The changing perceptions within the ASEAN of the Kampuchean issue have been dramatised by the stunning somersault of Thailand, which has been the frontline state in the Chinese and American against Indo-China, providing sanctuary for the Kap puchean rebels. Over the past few months, under the leadership of the Prime Minister, Chaticha Choonhavan, Bangkok has embarked on a policy of befriending its Indo-Chinese neighbours and holding direct talks with Hun Sen, whose Government Thailand is yet to recognise. Chatichal's approach is best of the second seco approach is based on the strategy of transforming the battlefields of Indo-China into a marketplace. Thai elite has come to believe that it is possible to create a sauvannaphuma (suvarnabhumi or golden land) in the land) in the entire region stretching from Burman Vietnam under the leadership of Thailand, vibrance of the The vibrance of the Thai economy, the new self-cond dence in Bangkok and the enticing prospect exploiting the natural resources and the phrough of Indo-China are the factors that have brough about a change in Thailand's Kampuchean political

(Continued on page 3)

Indo-Nepal Crisis: Overview

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THE sudden deterioration in Indo-Nepal relations following the expiry of the two bilateral treaties on trade and transit on March 23, 1989 has been most unfortunate indeed as it has heightened tensions between the two countries which have been bound by political, economic and cultural ties for centuries. The Government of India has of course been at pains to point out that the deterioration in . relations was not that 'sudden' since strains had developed in bilateral ties for a considerable length of time. However, there is no mistaking the fact that at the popular level, in Nepal in particular, the results of these strains found manifestation only in the period since March 23. And the popular outcry against India, to a large extent orchestrated by the Nepalese official circles in the light of those developments, has found an echo in the international sphere as well, adversely affecting India's global image in the process.

For almost four decades, that is, since the time of the signing of the Indo-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship (on July 31, 1950) the two neighbouring countries of South Asia have enjoyed a unique relationship on the basis of the provisions of that Treaty. Article VII of the Treaty is noteworthy

in this context. It reads:

"The Governments of India and Nepal agree to grant, on a reciprocal basis, to the nationals of one country in the territories of the other the same privileges in the matter of residence, ownership of property, participation in trade and commerce, movement and other privileges of a similar nature.

The peoples of the two states enjoy complete access to each other without passports and permits. Barring the IAS, IPS, and IFS, Nepalese nationals are permitted to work in virtually all Government services in India. Nepal's development owes a lot to Indian professionals while Nepalese labour have contributed substantially to the economic growth in several positive several parts of India. The Nepalese constitute one of the best regiments of the Indian army interms of disciplinations. The majority of sold regiments of the finding prowess. The majority of 800 million Indians subscribe to the religion of 800 million Indians subscribe to the feligion of Hinduism while Nepal with an 18 million possess. million population is the only Hindu state in the world. Indicate in Nepal Indians in various occupations in Nepal account for 1.5 lakhs and Nepalis working in India

Nepal being a landlocked country, its access to world is world in a landlocked country. the World is through India (it is surrounded on three sides by India). India (it is surrounded on almost impossible, three sides by India) since it is almost impossible, account of India) since it is almost impossible, on account of geographic reasons, to forge it through the land the China. In the past, that is, from 1950 to 1978, trade and transit between the two states was guided by a single transit between the two states was guided by a single treaty on trade and transit. In 1978 during the Janata regime, Nepal's insistence on two separate treaties bore fruit.

signed, on March 17, 1978, a treaty of trade, a separate treaty of transit and an agreement of cooperation to control "unauthorised trade" between the two countries. As a result, the unified Indo-Nepal treaty of trade and transit of 1971 was replaced by the two separate treaties, one on trade and the other on transit.

The trade treaty was to lapse on March 24, 1988 but it was extended on March 14, 1988 (that is, before the expiry date) first by four months and thereafter by three months. In the meantime, certain steps were taken to streamline Indo-Nepal trade. In June 1987 Nepal had, through a budgetary exercise at tariff rationalisation, completely removed all tariff advantages available to Indian goods in Nepal vis-a-vis those of third countries. Besides a 50 per cent basic customs duty, 55 per cent additional customs duty was also imposed on certain categories of goods imported from India. As a result, there was a decline in the Indian exports to Nepal by half in 1987-88.

This issue was taken up with the Nepalese Government by the Indian side. Nepal promised to remove the additional customs duty. on Indian goods. But that never materialised. Before the expiry of the twice extended trade treaty, on October 14, 1988, a draft trade treaty and an agreement to control unauthorised trade were initialled in New Delhi. But two specific commitments were sought to be extracted form Nepal in the course of the negotiations. It was the understanding, according to the Indian side. that the new draft treaty would be signed once Nepal (i) removed the additional customs duty on Indian goods; and (ii) did not extend such a facility to any third country. But even after five months when the Nepalese Government did not live upto the two commitments, India decided to drop the idea of signing the new draft trade treaty. Instead, it sent on March 1, 1989 its own proposal for an unified trade and transit treaty to which Nepal reacted with expected fury.

Actually the Government of India had reason to feel annoyed and angry. While Nepal resorted to feet-dragging on the question of waiving additional customs duty on Indian goods, in December 1988 it issued a notification granting a 60 per cent concession to Chinese goods entering Nepal. This was a case of gross discrimination that went against the spirit of the 1950 Indo-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friend-

ship, according to South Block.

Nepal has a different tale to relate. According to Ms. Bhinda S. Shah, Nepal's Ambassador to India. withdrawal of the additional custom duty on Indian goods was not to be a pre-condition to the signing of the new draft trade treaty. The new treaty itself contained a protocol which stated "with a view to (Continued on page 33)

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MAINBIRBAM May 6, 1989

The Eighth Five Year Plan

R.C. DUTT

THE Seventh Plan has entered its final year, and the last annual budget of the Central Government for this plan period has been presented to Parliament. Preparations for the Eighth Plan have commenced, and there have been discussions about the growth rate to be adopted for it. Even a paper has been prepared for the inputs required for the Plan on the varied assumptions of six per cent, 6.5 per cent and seven per cent rates of growth. It is time, therefore, that the possible shape and form of the Eighth Plan and the objectives it can serve are considered, rather than focussing attention on the current Plan for which the parameters have already been unalterably, set, and in respect of which only a post-mortem can be carried out now.

Changes of Policy

Nevertheless, the experience of the Seventh Plan is relevant, specially so because the Seventh Plan period has witnessed considerable reorientation of

the economic policies.

The Five Year Plans, it needs to be noted, do not stand in isolation by themselves. The inputs and, therefore, the outputs are influenced by the set of economic policies pursued. The changes in policies have already affected the Seventh Plan, and will increasingly govern the course of the Eighth. To what extent, in the circumstances, can the Eighth Plan meet the avowed objectives of self-reliant

development with social justice?

The new policies, it has been claimed, merely give "a new thrust" to the old policies, and are better designed to achieve the accepted plan objectives. In fact, however, whether deliberately so designed or not (and it is difficult to believe they were not so designed), they represent much more than a new thrust to the old policies. They represent a change of emphasis from the public to the private sector, from distributive justice to growth irrespective of such justice, and, above all, from planned to market development. It was in anticipation of this change, and therefore in realisation of the consequences of the change, that, for the first time after the First Plan, the Seventh Plan provided "quietly", as a then member of the Planning Commission recently put it, for a higher allocation of funds to the private than to the public sector. It was, however, not so quiet, for it was noted by all those interested in planning.

The Early Plans

Planned development, as it was envisaged by our early planners, was an attempt to mobilise such resources as could be available either domestically,

The author is a former Secretary, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India.

or, without harmful conditions and without undue dependence on them, from abroad, and to ration these resources by allocations to different channels of investment on the basis of priorities determined by the Plan. In such allocations greater reliance was placed on the public than on the private sector Certain areas of investment were reserved exclusively for the former, while leaving the remaining areas to

private as well as to public ventures.

This was necessary for several reasons. It was necessary to prevent concentration of wealth in a few private hands, and consequently mal-distribution of income. More importantly, reliance on public sector was necessary for development, not with an eye solely to profit, but to achieve the plan object tives of self-reliance and social justice. Self-reliance required that infrastructural goods like steel, col and heavy machinery should be produced in adequate quantities, and social justice needed that investments should be directed to increase the supply of goods for the consumption of the poor, colle tively known as wage goods. Investments in these areas may not yield quick profits, and the private enterprises may not, therefore, be interested in them. They are all the same necessary if self reliance and social justice are to be achieved.

This strategy of development needed several sleps

(i) a fiscal policy to mobilise resources to the maximum extent possible, and in the process, in a limited manner, redistribute incomes;

(ii) control over the private sector to ensure that it conforms to the discipline of the Plan. Since investments have to be made out of the told volume of national savings (apart from foreign savings and deficit financing) any mis-investment in the private sector reduces the capacity 10 invest in the desired directions;

(iii) conservation of foreign exchange to med the needs of planned investments, without incur-

ing unmanageable foreign debt obligations; (iv) containment of non-Plan expenditure of the

Government.

In all these respects, however, there have been policy changes with the result that the avowed plate objectives of self-reliance and of distributive justice, which include which include eradication of poverty (garibi hald) though not formally repudiated, or even modified are no longer achievable. In fact, in the new policy framework planning is being reduced to a programme of public investment in infrastructural areas without any control without any control of the private sector, and therefore becoming therefore becoming increasingly redundant.

Tilt towards the Rich

The fiscal policy today is heavily influenced by the sire to space the desire to spare the rich, as an incentive to great cooperation on the cooperation on their part in investment program

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This has led to reduction in the rates of direct about the dangers of inflation it gives rise to. The mes. This is sought to be rationalised on the basis taxes which is sought to be rationalised on the basis taxes which the taxes of the unproved hypothesis that lower rates of taxes of the unproved hypothesis and the rates of taxes of the unphetter collections, and therefore in fact in higher revenues. This has not happened, and the in higher tevenue (net of States' share) stagnated direct tax revenue (DP though the direct tan cent of the GDP, though the Long Term at 1.5 per cent of the GDP, though the Long Term at 1.5 per cent of the Dor, though the Long Term Fiscal Policy (LTFP) had projected that it would rise to two per cent in 1988-89. On the contrary, the indirect tax revenue rose to 7.7 per cent in 1987-88 (Revised Estimate) and 7.6 per cent in 1988-89 (Budget Estimate), against the LTFP projections of 6.9 and 7.2 per cent respectively for these two years.1 The regressive character of the taxes was thus emphasised.

More serious was the fact that the balance from current revenues (BCR), defined as the balance of current receipts (excluding external grants) over non-Plan revenue expenditure (including capital outlay on border roads and Defence) which for the first time became negative in 1985-86 at 0.4 per cent of the GDP instead of being evened out in 1987-88, as anticipated by the LTFP, continued to be negative, and in fact rose to the negative figure of 1.1 per cent in 1985-89.2 This meant that the tax revenue, instead of financing at least a part of Plan expenditure was not able to finance fully even the non-Plan expenditure. In fact, about three-fourths of the direct tax revenue of the Central Government could be regarded as not available for Plan expenditure, as it was needed for non-Plan purposes.

Fiscal Consequences

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The result was that the Government has had to fall back increasingly on market borrowing and deficit financing to finance plan expenditure. The progressive increase in these items can be seen from the following table.3

- C.		¥.		1.1		In Rs	. Crores	
	198 B.E.	6-87 R.E.	1987 B.E.		1988 B.E.	89 R.E.	1989-90 B.E.	
Market Borrowings	5300	5300	6300	7000	7000	7250	7400	
Deficit	Actual 3703 8261*		Actual 5688 5816 748			4 7940 7337		

This includes Rs. 1200 crores advanced to the Food Corporation of India which were previously financed by bank credit.

The Government of India have claimed credit for having made financial allocations to the extent of Plan The seventh an occasion to the Seventh Plan. This many be so, but it cannot be overlooked that this hand be so, but it cannot be overlooked that this has been done by increasing inordinately both markets. both market borrowing and deficit financing. Neither of these can be increased indefinitely.

Indeed, market borrowing introduces a vicious rele. The market borrowing introduces a vicious circle. The more market borrowing is resorted to, the greater market borrowing is resorted to, the greater are the interest charges to be paid, and the less therefore that is available to meet government expenditure. On the other hand, the less that is available course the more is is available for government expenditure the more is market horself. Market borrowing needed to meet the expenditure.

About document expenditure the expenditure. About deficit financing, economists are unanimous though above the acceptable limit, is not higher than it is, should not generate complacency. There are certain factors, such as liberal imports, good harvest after the drought year which have kept prices in check. It would be dangerous to depend on the continuance of these factors.

On the expenditure side the position is equally As a result of increased borrowings, the expenditure on interest charges has been going up from year, and for the current year (1989-90) it constitutes the highest item of expenditure, exceeding even Defence expenditure by Rs 4000 crores. Another heavy item of expenditure is that described as "major subsidies", that is subsidies for food, fertilisers and export promotion. The progress of these expenditure items can be seen from the following table.4

STATE OF THE PARTY	CONTRACTOR OF STREET				ALCOHOL: NAME OF			AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PARTY OF
	1985-8 (Account.					1988- BE		989-90 BE
Interest Payments	7503.46	8750	9550	10650	11450	14100	14150	17000
Major		A.					1	
Subsidies Food		1750	2000	- 2000	22000	2300	2200	2200
Fertilisers		Charles and the same of the sa	1893		2210	3000	3250	3651
Export Promotion		555	788	870	960	1091	1391	1621

4780

5370

6391

6841

7472

4255 4681

Total .

In Rs. Crores

There are of course other items of government expenditure which are on the increase from year to year. A certain lavishness has entered into government spending with the abandonment of the old idea of austerity. Apart from these, however, the two items mentioned above are not only the two most intractable ones, but represent the changed attitude, and therefore, the policies of the Government. The increase in market borrowings arises out of a desire to reduce the tax burden on the rich. Not only have the rates of direct taxes been consistently reduced over the last few years on the specious plea that this will increase the total tax revenues, which it has not, but no attempt has been made to tax the large agricultural incomes that have accrued to the rich farmers in the Green Revolution areas. On the contrary, much of the subsidies have gone to finance the inputs of these rich farmers. Some of the subsidies have also gone in favour of exporters without a corresponding increase in their exports.

Besides, a part of government spending represents an attempt to protect the salaries, wages, and pensions of the dominant, but not so poor, classes against inflationary erosion of these incomes, leaving the poorer and less articulate classes to face the full rigours of the inflation whose intensity is thereby accelerated. All this represents a concern for the more dominant, but at the same time the more affluent sections of society, and the distortions caused thereby can be rectified only by a change of this attitude. In the present configuration of social change.

Decontrol of Private Sector

Another change, arising out of the same concern for the dominant classes, is the concession to the industrialists, very noticeable in the last few years, to free them from the control of the Five Year Plans. A systematic dismantling of the system of licence and control has left the entrepreneurs free to make their investments in any area of the economy they choose. They naturally choose the areas which give them the highest profit, not those that meet the needs of the poor. This has given rise to the phenomenon referred to as Dual Society, where a comparatively small proportion, ten or at most fifteen per cent, are being catered to, to the neglect of the rest. It has also accelerated the process of concentration of wealth and income, increasing disparities and adding to mal-distribution. In these circumstances, it is a pathetic effort to try to alleviate poverty merely by introducing a few schemes for rural employment.

The 1988-90 budget provides for Rs 681 crores for the Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Scheme (RLEGP) and for Rs 530 crores for the National Rural Employment Programme (NREP). The latter is to be supplemented by matching grants from the States, and the two are expected to provide for 244 million mandays and 338 million mandays of employment respectively. To this has now been added the Nehru Rojgar Yojana Scheme with an allotment of Rs 500 crores. 5 On the same reckoning, this may provide 179 million mandays of employment. The total employment potential of all these schemes is thus 761 million mandays. On the assumption that the schemes will provide employment for 250 days in the year all the three schemes can employ only a little over three million persons.

Considering that the organised sector of industries. specially the private sector, contributes little towards additional employment, considering also that the capitalist form which the Green Revolution has taken has added to, rather than reduced the numbers of the landless, and taking into account the additional numbers injected into the labour force by demographic pressure, the effect of the rural employment schemes is at best marginal towards solving the problem of unemployment or under employment. The problem can be solved, or at least seriously tackled, only by planned orientation of industries with employment generation as an important objective, and even more by land reform and by encouraging co-operativisation of farming which would lead to more labour-oriented. intensive cultivation. These are, however, beyond the capacity of the Plans as now conceived.

Another tendency which has assumed dangerous proportions is the pursuit of profit-oriented growth, irrespective not only of its direction, as stated above, but also of its nature. This is landing us in a state of utter dependence on the capitalist world, in complete disregard of our earlier cherished objective of selfreliance. In the name of competition, which hardly exists in the classical sense even in the capitalist

force there is of course no indication of shell and with liberal imports of plants and undermined with liberal imports of plants and mac hinery. Even the latest budget has reduced import duties on some of the capital goods while calling upon the domestic industry to face the consequences of higher prices of steel and coal. Imports, even otherwise, have been generally liberalised on the argument that they would provide inputs at internationally competitive prices to our domestic industries which would enable them to export more Import of foreign technology has also been liberal. on the same argument without, however strengthening the indigenous R & D to absorb the technology so acquired.

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The result of the import liberalisation measures has been an outflow of foreign exchange which has not been matched, as was hoped, by a corresponding inflow of foreign exchange on account of export earnings. According to the Economic Survey for 1988-89, the trade balance which averaged minus 3.4 per cent of the GDP during the Sixth Plan. increased to minus 3.7 per cent in 1985-86 and fell to minus 3.2 per cent in 1986-87. The invisibles, however, which accounted for a net flow of 2.1 per cent of the GDP on the average in the Sixth Plan fell to 1.4 per cent in 1985-86, and further to 1.2 per cent in 1986-87 with the result that the current balance of payments which was minus 1.3 per cent on the average in the Sixth Plan rose to minus 2.3 per cent of the GDP in 1985-86 and fell slightly to minus 2.0 per cent in 1986 87. The Economic Survey, however, adds that "during 1987-88, full balance of payments data for which is not available, the ratio of current account deficit to GDP is likely to be larger than in 1986-87." This apprehension is confirmed by the fact that the foreign exchange reserve at the end of 1987-88 was less by Rs 464 crores than at the end of the previous year. It fell further by Rs 1720 crores at the end of January 1989.6

There is, however, nothing surprising in the trend revealed by the above figures. The assumption that increased export earnings could cover the foreign exchange requirements of a country as large as India, when it is allowed to import freely its industrial inputs, was, to say the least, abinitio sound. To be able to do so, it would be necessary to break new ground; not merely increase the conventional exports, but to enter new fields of export It is, however, in these new fields that in the present international context the resistance is the great test. It is no wonder, therefore, that while substantial tial gains have been recorded in the export of such items as readymade garments and gems and jewellers, there has been no significant increase in engineering goods in spite of the fact that much of the export promotion effort in the form of liberal import of capital goods and other inputs, including import of technology, has been directed towards this area. The developed countries of the capitalist world will not readily of not readily allow such sophisticated items to be developed in developed developed in developing countries to compete with their own products.

Two alternative options are available in the cit The Options Available

cumstances, and they both arise out of the continued comstance, increase the country's familiary creates. imbalance increase the country's foreign indebted-One is dependence on the capitalist world. India has already attained the dubious distinworld fits foreign debts being the fourth largest, after the three Latin American countries of Mexico, Brazil and Argentina. Debt servicing already takes up more than 24 per cent of India's export earnings. This balance of payment deficit cannot continue indefinitely and needs adjustment. This can be done either by a further dose of IMF loans with all the conditionalities that such a loan involves, or, as the World Bank has recently been stressing, by direct foreign investments which could hasten the adjustment process. In either case the dependence syndrome is deepened.

Alternatively, the growing balance of payments deficit and the falling foreign exchange reservice can be met by adhoc cuts in imports. Such, however, when the economy is increasingly geared to and is therefore increasingly dependent on foreign inputs, must necessarily affect its growth rate. If this option is exercised without a structural change in the economy, there will be a clear threat to the prospects of growth, giving rise to a prospect of stagnation, if not worse.

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It is in this scenario that the Eighth Plan needs to be considered. There have been brave talks that a five per cent rate of growth having been attained in the Seventh Plan it is now legitimate to aim for something higher, at least six per cent, as if the success or otherwise of a Plan depends entirely on the growth rate it achieves. It is overlooked that a higher growth rate' does not necessarily carry an assurance that the growth will be self-reliant in nature, or that it will eradicate poverty except by the "trickling down" process. The growth rate is relevant only if the growth is in the right direction and of the right direction and of the right nature.

The justification of a Plan lies in its capacity to achieve the objectives laid down in the Plan itself. In our case these objectives are self-reliant development, eradication of poverty and a more equitable distribution of wealth and income. These, objectives can be of wealth and income. tives can be achieved only by reordering the pattern of investment. In the present situation, however the present situation in the present situation in the present situation. ever, the Plan has lost this capacity. The capacity of the state to make public investments is limited by the resources at its command, and as these resources at present are unable to meet even the non-Plan expenditure it has lost the capacity to make public investments except by borrowing and deficit financing. The state ing. The state may also influence private invest-ment by a system of control, but this capacity is also being married dismantling also being marginalised by a systematic dismantling of the control system.

The Eighth Plan, or for that matter any future an under the Plan under the present set of economic policies, can therefore therefore at best make some investments in the infrastructural sector, not to set the pattern of investments in the economy, but to subserve the pattern that emerges are subserved the market that emerges out of the market forces. The market

forces, of course, are not committed to any of the objectives aforesaid. They have their own logic, and are governed by forces, both domestic and external. Domestically, the motive of private profit turns investments away from the needs of the poor which, however real and insistent, promise little profit, and the forces of competition work in favour of the strong and the wealthy resulting in greater concentration of wealth, and therefore of income distribution. Both these factors, instead of making for better distribution of income and for eradication of poverty makes the situation worse. Against these forces, special employment schemes to alleviate poverty have little effect. Unintegrated with the productive processes of the economy, and with little prospect therefore of generating funds which can assure their continuance, they depend precariously on the dwindling resources of the State, and in any case are unequal to meet the much stronger market forces which encourage gross disparity in income distribution.

Externally, the desire to make quick profit induces the indigenous entrepreneurs to seek foreign collaboration even as junior partners. Initially, the insistence of the World Bank and the IMF to open up the Indian economy evoked the opposition of the Indian entrepreneurs who feared international competition. Gradually, however, this opposition has subsided, and the local entrepreneurs now see in import liberalisation, and perhaps more so in technological collaboration, even in foreign investments, a way to earn profits which they had feared might be limited by the Indian market being restricted to the affluent sections of the people. That explains why technological collaborations are being entered into enthusiastically, and there is little opposition to such massive schemes of foreign investment as represented by Merril Lynch UTI Agreement. The fact that in the long run this abject dependence on foreign capital is good neither for the country nor for the collaborators themselves does not seem to bother them, for, in the celebrated words of Lord Keynes, "in the long term we are all dead'

There has indeed been a convergence of outlook of the Indian industrial bourgeoisie, to which is now linked the rural landowners who have recently emerged as an influential class, and the world capitalist forces. It is this outlook that has governed the economic policies of the country since the early eighties, and has "liberalised" or "opened up" the economy to the market forces. These policies have little use for planning in the sense of an effort to divert deliberately the economy from the service of the affluent classes who have the purchasing power to make their demands felt to those who have not, and to achieve this type of development on a selfreliant basis. The legacy of the freedom movement. and the momentum of the Plans formulated by the early planners after independence cannot, however, be easily denied. The paraphernalia of planning, therefore, continues, as also nominal adherence to the concepts of self-reliance and social justice, long after its substance has been radically diluted.

Plan or no Plan in these circumstances makes little (continued on page 35)

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ASIA-PACIFIC

Prospects for Peace, Security and Cooperation

K. SUBRAHMANYAM

Never before in the history of last forty three years since the end of Second World War have prospects for peace, interpreted as absence of interstate conflict, have been brighter in the Asian Pacific

region.

The Sino-Soviet confrontation is in the process of being converted into normalcy in not only state-tostate relations but also in interparty relations. An initiative has been taken following the visit of the Soviet Foreign Minister, Shevernadze, to Japan to set up a working group to examine jointly the issue of Northern islands, which has been the cause of strain in Soviet Japanese relations. The two Koreas have started the preliminaries of a dialogue though they have far to go before these preliminaries will mature into a serious negotiations on the steps The intermediate range towards reunification. missiles in Soviet Asia are being destroyed and there has been meaningful reduction in Soviet, forces in Mongolia and Soviet-Chinese border. A framework of settlement of the Amur river boundary on the basis of natural geographic principles (the Thalweg principle) has been evolved. In Southeast Asia serious negotiations are taking place to resolve the Kampuchean issue. The Indian Prime Minister visited Beijing in quest of normalisation of relationship with China and an equitable border settlement. The military regime in Pakistan yielding place to a democratically elected one, though under various constraints imposed by the military, has improved the prospects for better understanding and relationship between India and Pakistan. Never before have we witnessed such a concatenation of developments contributing to international peace in this region.

Peace, as absence of inter-state war is one thing and peace as a nonviolent cooperative international regime is quite another. While the first development is taking place and is to be welcomed we have to go far for the second goal. That goal has been spelt out in Rajiv-Gorbachev Declaration (Delhi Declaration) of November 1986. In this respect however while there are a number of possible developments taking place all over the region, it has to be recognised that intra-state peace among all nations of the region and genuine international cooperation are far more difficult goals to achieve than the elimination of nuclear

The author is a Nehru Fellow, formerly Director, Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi. This paper was presented by him at the International Conference on Cooperation for Peace, Security and Development in Asia-Pacific Region, organised by the International Institute for Asia-Pacific Studies, New Delhi (April 27-29, 1989).

weapons even about which many people in the world have serious doubts. Let us now look at positive and negative international developments in regard to inter and intra-state peace in this region objecti-

The most significant positive development is Marxism has shed its dogmatism and is increasingly accepting pluralism as inevitable in the political existence of peoples. Stalinism is dead and maoism too is dead though not yet buried. Communism is no longer a centralised dogma to be scrupulously followed by the faithful as interpreted by a central church. This has contributed immensely not only to inter-state peace (since ideological differences no longer constitute a basis for inter-state conflicts) but also to intrastate peace. Revolution is no longer an exportable commodity. It never was but is being recognised so only now. The changes that have come about in Marxism can only be compared to those that came about in the Catholic Christianity with Martin Luther and rise of various protestant sects which in turn led to secularisation of Christianity. Marxism was always secular and materialistic but permitting pluralism is to discard the dogmatism which had characterised it in the last six decades. The Maoist dogmas that the primary contradiction in the globe was between capitalism and socialism and one had to lean to one side or the other and no third road was available have now been thrown into the dustbin of history.

Three decades ago Jawaharlal Nehru set forth his "Basic Approach" on these issues in an article in the AICC Economic Review on August 15, 1958. He

wrote:

Indeed, essentially our problems are those of civilisation itself. Religion gave a certain moral and spiritual disc pline; it also tried to perpetuate superstition and social usages. Those superstitions and social usages enmeshed and overwhelmed the real spirit of religion. Disillusion ment followed.

Communism comes in the wake of this disillusionment and offers some kind of faith and some kind of discipline. To some extent it fills a vacuum. It succeeds in some measure by giving a contract of its by giving a content to a man's life. But in spite of its apprent success, it fails partly because of its rigidity but even more so, because it ignores certain essential needs of

There is much talk in communism of the contradictions of capitalist society and there is truth in that analysis. But we see the growing account there is truth in that analysis are the growing account. see the growing contradictions within the rigid framework of communism itself. Its suppression of individual fred dom brings about powerful to the result for the result fo dom brings about powerful reactions. Its contempt for what might be called the moral and spiritual side of the not only ignores something that is basic in man but use deprives human behaviours of the state of values. Its unit of the state of values are the state of values. deprives human behaviour of standards and values, persua fortunate, association with violence encourages a certain evil tendency in human the violence encourages a evil tendency in human beings.

I have the greatest admiration for many of the achievements of the Soviet II. ments of the Soviet Union. Among the great achievement is the value attached to the child and the common man

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Their system of calculation and rightly that there is best in the world. But it is said, and rightly, that there is suppression of individual freedom here. And yet the spread decision in all its forms is itself a tremendom like suppression in all its forms is itself a tremendous liberatof education in ultimately will not tolerate that suppressing force which ultimately will not tolerate that suppressing forcedom. This again is another controdiction sion of freedom. This again is another contradiction. Unsion of freedom. This again is another contradiction. Unfortunately, communism became too closely associated with the necessity for violence and thus the idea which it placed before the world became a tainted one. Means displaced below we see the powerful influence of wrong means

Communism charges the capitalist structure of society with being based on violence and class conflict. I think this is essentially correct, though the capitalist structure itself has undergone and is continually undergoing a change because of democratic and other struggles. The question is how, to get rid of of inequality and have a classless society with equal opportunities for all. Can this be achieved through methods of violence, or can it be possible to bring about the changes through peaceful methods. Communism has definitely allied itself to the approach of violence. Even if it does not indulge normally in physical violence, its language is of violence, its thought is violent and it does not seek to change by persuasion or peaceful democratic pressures, but by coersion and indeed by destruction and extermination. Fascism has all these evil aspects of violence and extermination in their grossest forms and, at the same time, has no acceptable ideal.

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This is completely opposed to the peaceful approach which Gandhiji taught us. Communists as well as anti-communists both seem to imagine that a principle can be stoutly defended only by language of violence and by condemning those who do not accept it. For both of them there are no shades, there is only black or white. That is the old approach of the bigoted aspects of some religions. It is not the approach of tolerance of feeling that perhaps others might have some share of the truth also. Speaking for myself, I find this approach wholly unscientific, unreasonable and uncivilised whether it is applied in the realm of religion or economic theory or anything else. I prefer the old pagan approach of tolerance, apart from its religious aspects. But whatever we may think about it, we have arrived at a stage in the modern world when an attempt at forcible imposition of ideas on any large section of people is bound ultimately to fail. In present circumstances this will lead to war and tremendous destruction. There will be no victory, only defeat for everyone. We have seen in the last year or two that it is not easy even for great powers to reintroduce colonial control over territories which have recently become independent. That was exemplified by the Suez incident in 1956. Also what happened in Hungary demonstrated that the desire for national freedom is even stronger than any ideology and cannot ultimately be suppressed. pressed. What happened in Hungary was not essentially a conflict between communism and anti-communism. It represented nationalism striving for freedom from foreign

Thus violence, cannot possibly lead today to a solution of any major problem because violence has become much too terrible and destructive. The moral approach to the question has now because followed by the practiquestion has now been powerfully reinforced by the practi-

If the society which we aim at cannot be brought about by big-scale wielence help? by big-scale violence, will small-scale violence help? Surely not, partly because that ieself may lead to a big-phere of conflict and of disruption...

nism have tended to distort our vision of socialism. given violence a predominant part. Socialism should theref.

Also the technique of struggle evolved by community of the refore be considered apart from these political elegeneral character of social, political and intellectual life those productive resources. As and thinking of the community changes,

THE Rajiv-Gorbachev Declaration focusses on the MAINSTREAM May 6, 1989

Their system of education and healthized by probability that there is world and highlights the world. But it is said, and rightly, that there is world and highlights the lent world from community life upwards. One sees certain parallelism between Nehru's basic approach and Gorbachev's 'Perestroika.'

This present ferment in the Communist societies has set the pace for transformation of the international order. Ideology has ceased to be a major cause for war and peaceful coexistence is recognised as an imperative of our times. Having built up arsenals exceeding 50,000 nuclear warheads the two foremost military powers have now jointly declared repeatedly (at Geneva in 1985, at Rejkyavik in 1986, in Washington in 1987 and in Moscow in 1988) that a nuclear war is not winnable and therefore must not be fought. Nuclear deterrence is consequently losing its credibility among nations which are heavily armed with nuclear weapons.

In today's world, war as an instrument of policy is unthinkable even in the absence of nuclear. weapons. There is a time lag in political and military establishments of the industrialised nations realising that the density of industrialisation, the extensive use of synthetic materials in clothes, buildings and articles of day to day use, atomic power plants and so on will make even an ordinary war with conventional explosives result in hundreds of Chernobyls and thousands of Bhopals engulfing continents, besides the adverse impact on climate (whether it will result in a nuclear winter of the proportion predicted by Carl Sagan or not is beside the point). These have made even a conventional war nonviable as an instrument of policy among industrialised

The history of the last four decades highlights that while it is feasible to occupy a nation at moderate cost, it is extremely costly to keep a nation under occupation because of the rise in political consciousness of the people all over the world. That is the lesson of the first and second Indochina Wars, Afghanistan, Portuguese anti-colonial Zimbabwe, Namibia and Kampuchea. The existentialist aspect' of deterrence is not confined to nuclear deterrence but extends to war in the industrialised world. This is the primary reason why the industrialised world has been at peace for the last four

Today it is also better understood, except in situations of extreme assymmetry where only one side has nuclear weapons and the other side has not, it will be difficult to keep control over the firing of nuclear weapons once the nuclear weapons exchange starts. There will be tremendous pressure to use them so as not to lose them. A controlled nuclear exchange or limited nuclear exchange has lost most of its credibility.

Very significant changes are taking place in international balance of power. The US has steadily been losing its hegemoney but not to the Soviet Union alone. While militarily the USSR is the primary countervailing power, technologically and commercially the US is challenged by Germany and Japan, and agriculturally by the EEC, Canada, Australia, Argentina, etc, Politically the decolonisation has brought into being a hundred new nations into refuse to treat the East-West conflict as the primary reference point to determine their respective foreign policies. The US Commission on Long Term Integrated Strategy envisages the possibility of Japan and China overtaking the USSR in GNP and power terms but yet obsessively treats only USSR as the sole adversary. In 1992 Western Europe is planning to get integrated with abolition of all tariff barriers and the Western Europeans are thinking independently of their own space programme, nuclear modernisation, aircraft, naval and other modernisations. The Soviet Union is attempting to implement perestroika and China an economic and military modernisation programme.

It is thus somewhat unrealistic to envisage that the strategic relationships among the major powers of the world, US, EEC, USS3, China and Japan would continue in the same framework we have so far been familiar with in the last four decades. Even within that period we saw a Sino-Soviet alliance breakup. Japan and West Germany have become industrial giants who do not always see eye to eye with the US on economic issues. Today one can notice a certain divergence of attitudes towards USSR as between US and Western Europe and among Western European countries. Though in nuclear age no one anticipates wars between US and its commercial and technological competitors there are likely to be conflicts of interests. Even the US Commission on long term integrated strategy recognises that "In the decades ahead, a key question affecting the strategic balance will be whether Japan exercises its option to become a major military power. Even if it does not, it may be influencing the strategic environment simply by its investment decisions. A Japanese decision to help in the development of Soviet technology, for example could help to increase the Soviet military potential. On the other hand, additional Japanese economic assistance to US allies and friends would benefit our security." The same could be said of the EEC though the US Commission in its report has made no reference to the EEC at all.

While it is difficult to forecast the kind of strategic balance that would emerge it is obvious that the world order would no longer be dominated by a hegemonic US or by US-USSR rivalry. A world order with at least five power centres will be a far more complex one than the bipolar framework which has been the basis of much of strategic analysis in the last four decades. Apart from these five power centres there are also likely to be a number of middle range powers which are likely to act independently and whose manoeuvrability in the international system would be considerably enhanced because of the existence of five power centres. Already one can see that countries like India, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Pakistan, Vietnam etc can act with a lot of local autonomy and in future this list may expand to include countries like Egypt, Nigeria, Brazil. Argentina and some others.

WHILE these political and strategic shifts in balances

the UN system, which are nonaligned and which are no nonaligned and which are no nonaligned and which are no nonaligned and which are not not no nonaligned and nonaligned and nonaligned and nonaligned and nonaligned and n adequately planned for and anticipated, a far more significant factor may compel the attention of the entire international community and compel it to unite to take joint global action, which would neces. sitate many of the current antagonistic attitudes among nations to change and a more cooperative political order to emerge. That factor is the possibility of climatic change consequent on the greenhouse effect building up in the biosphere as a result of emission of carbon dioxide, sulfur dioxide, oxides of nitrogen, etc arising out of industrial energy requirements and increase in automobile transportation involving burning of fossil fuels and injection of 18 billion tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere annually.

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The statement issued by the International Conference on the "Changing Atmosphere: Implications for Global Security" held at Toronto on June 27-30, 1988 sponsored by the Government of Canada in collaboration with UN agencies, with participation of more than 300 scientists and policy makers from 48 countries, declared that the ultimate consequences of climatic change could be second only to a global nuclear war. One could argue that since the leaders of the US and USSR have jointly declared on four occasions (Geneva Summit 1985, Rejkavik Summit 1986, Washington Summit 1987 and Moscow Summit 1988) that a nuclear war between the two powers cannot be fought and won and therefore ought not to be initiated, the probability of adverse effects of climatic change taking place is higher than those of a global nuclear war.

Conference statement pointed out that continuing alteration of the global atmosphere threatened global security, the world economy and the natural environment through:

1. climate warming, raising sea level and altered precipitation patterns induced by the "heatstrap" effects of greenhouse gases.

2. depletion of the ozone layer and

3. increased regional and urban pollution changes, according to the Conference These statement will:

1. imperil, human health and welfare

2. diminish global food security, through greater shifts and uncertainties in agricultural production, particularly for many vulnerable regions. 3. increase political instability and the potential

for international conflicts.

4. jeopardise prospects for sustainable economic development and reduction of poverty and 5. threaten extinction of animal and plant species

upon which human survival depends.

The conference warned that if remedial action was not taken soon by the countries of the world these problems would become progressively more serious difficult serious, difficult to reverse and costly to adress.

The statement spelt out the scientific basis for concern. Though its concern. Though considerable uncertainties enter loped these formulations there was a basic consensus among the scientist among the scientists on the nature and direction climatic change. The differences were in respect of quantitative estimates quantitative estimates which could be expressed only in terms of ranges.

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The rising concerns over the consequences of CO2 and The rising concerns over the consequences of CO₂ and other gaseous emissions point out the need to revisit the nuclear power option which lost some credibility due to nuclear safety radioactive due to nuclear power option unclear safety, radioactive wastes problems related to nuclear safety, radioactive wastes and nuclear weapons proliferation. If these problems can be solved, through improved engineering designs and can be solved, arrangements nuclear power could be a significant to the country of the institutional arrangements nuclear power could have a role to play in lowering CO₂ emissions.

It is against this international background that one has to evaluate the strategic situation in the Asian Pacific region. Except for Japan, the Soviet Union and the newly industrialised countries, the rest of the region consists of developing countries. With a few exception the rest of them are excolonial countries whose development and international interaction were frozen during the colonial period. The tribes, principalities, diverse religions, ethnic and linguistic groups of populations have begun the process of nation-building only in the last few decades and they are going through the same turbulence, inter and interstate violence that the developed nations of the present day went through in the period they were evolving as nation states (17th, 18th, 19th and first half of 20th century), ending in two world wars. Even today in the developed world there are instances like Northern Ireland, Corsican, Basque and Croatian separatisms. The religious conflicts in the developing world are replays of the thirty-years war in Germany, the persecution of Catholics in Britain, protestants in France, the Spanish Inquisition and the compulsions on various sects to flee, England in search of autonomy in New England. The developed nations of today face the additional problem which the developed nations did not in their days of evolution as nation states — the powerful developed nations with their policies of interventionism.

The developed nations underwent their industrialisation process under very harsh conditions of 18th and 19th century (without trade unions, human rights and democracy), had a low population growth rate (because the health technology had not advanced to the present state) and could export their populations to the whole western hemisphere and Oceania. They could extract labour from slaves and create capital for investment. Today the developing nations face a population explosion because modern health technology has brought down the death rate precipitiously all of a sudden. There are no sparsely populated lands to export their populations and populated lands to export their populations: lations and displace or decimate local populations; concepts of democracy, human rights and trade union rights have spread to those populations before adecus have spread to those populations before adequate wealth has been created by sweated labour through industrialisation before democratisation came about as happened in the developed world. Consequently the developing nations face an exceedingly difficult task in building stable and cohesive party difficult task in building them and cohesive nation-states and consolidating them and at the carried and consolidating them and at the same time fulfil the rising expectations of deforestation soil. The net result has been destabilisation of deforestation, soil erosion and destabilisation of cological balls of Cold ecological balance. The superimposition of Cold

The Energy Working Group of the Gonfarance Foundation and Indian and interventionist policies have further exacerbated the likely to become intolerable, if as predicted, the global population will grow to 14 billions by the end of the 21st century and the tropical forests get destroyed further, the green-house effect gets aggravated and sea level rises. The majority of the 14 billions will be in Asia.

> This region contains the world's first (China), second (India), third (USSR), fifth (Indonesia), sixth (Japan), eighth (Bangladesh), and ninth (Pakistan) most populous nations of the world. Consequently unlike what Mao Dze Dung predicted the storm centre-of the world is not likely to be Africa but this region where the future of humankind will be largely but not exclusively decided.

As mentioned earlier in this paper while inter-state conflicts may decline the intra-state conflicts do not show any signs of doing so. The nation state building and evolution process themselves generate significant intra-state violence. In societies with nonrepresentational polities there is a struggle for representational government. In nations where there is intolerance towards religious and sectarian minorities there is resistance for transforming the state towards secularism. While linguistic rights, and ethnic identities are denied there are violent protests. Where the military demands the Government there are violent attempts to replace the regimes with more representational governments. In a sense the creation of a large number of small, mini and micro states (nearly 100 in the international system with very small populations (ranging from a few thousand to a few millions) have stirred up ambitions of minorities to aspire for sovereignty or at least greater autonomy.

Turbulence due to such factors, as mentioned earlier, is to be found even in present-day Europe where the nation states have reached a relatively more stable stage in their evolution. In such circumstances one has to expect that intra-state turbulence in Asian nations will continue till such time greater pluralism, religious tolerance, autonomy for minorities, decentralisation in power structures, development and alleviation of poverty come about. Peace and security depend upon advance towards pluralism and democracy, tolerance and sustainable development and alleviation of poverty and protecting and strengthening the planet's ecological balance.

. These developments can come about only with practice of peaceful coexistence among the nations and a cooperative international order. Till now strategic thought in most of the world has focussed on a single dimension - the military one to the exclusion of all other factors. Increasingly it is being recognised that security has many dimensions military, developmental, ecological and humani-tarian. Nehru had a total view of security and peace except that the ecological factors did not perhaps attract much of his attention. Today Gorbachev displays a similar holistic approach, inclusive of ecological issues as reflected in the Vladivostock, Krasnoyorsk and UN speeches.

MAINSTREAM May 6, 1989

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Nehruvian-Gorbachevian vision. In a conversation with the foreign participants following 53rd Pugwash symposium in Beijing in October 1988 a highly placed Chinese official said while Gorbachev's Vladivostock and Krasnoyorsk speeches represented visions and they had a positive appraisal of them, their attention would be focussed on solving urgent and immediate problems of bilateral nature. That is not an unrepresentative view. Consequently it is necessary to think of steps which would bring about a qualitative transformation in the mood in Asia as has been brought about in Europe. We have behind us the spirit of the Bolshevik and the Chinese Revolutions with their visions of egalatarian societies, the spirit of Gandhi with his creed of nonviolence, the Bandung spirit, the Panchsheel and the spirit of the Asian Relations Conference and all these are assets to build on.

Given the complexities arising out of diversities of civilisations, religions, political philosophies, and stages of development in the Asian Pacific region it is obvious that a stage by stage approach is inescapable and all issues that create problems of peace, security and cooperation cannot be solved overnight. It is also essential that we move from easier problems to more complex and sensitive problems and in the process generate confidence-building. Out of four broad categories of problems of security, developmental, ecological and humanitarian the last is most difficult to solve given the centuries old dogmatism of various kinds peoples and governments are conditioned to. The problem that one could begin with, given the present global understanding about nuclear war and declining utility of force in international disputes, is the security

issue.

Except for the Soviet Union, Japan, the USA which is militarily present in Asia and a few other nations the majority of the nations are nonaligned. Except for Japan, US, Australia and New Zealand all other countries including China and USSR have voted consistently in the UN for banning the use and threat of use of nuclear weapons. The first step that could be taken is for the Asian nations to join together to sign an agreement among themselves that they are banning the use and threat of use of nuclear weapons, and pending all other nuclear weapon powers and their allies joining the agreement they all subscribe to "no first use doctrine" against the territories of other participant nations, and they will not permit their soils and territorial waters to be used by nuclear weapon carriers of any other nations or for nuclear war fighting infrastructure so be instal led. In 1963 China proposed an Asian Pacific nuclear weapon free zone, the ASEAN nations are for ZOPFAN (Zone of Peace Freedom and Neutrality) and for a nuclear weapon free zone in South East Asia. Japan professes three non-nuclear principles, some of the South Asian countries want a nuclear weapon free zone. While a nuclear free zone as advocated at present only legitimises nuclear weapons and has no verification provisions and hence has proved nonviable a treaty urging ban of use and threat of use of nuclear weapons, adopting

THE problem before us is how is the length of bases for the problem before us is how it is the problem before us in the problem bef structure for other powers, is a feasible proposition It will contribute towards deligitimising nuclear weapons, advance the principle of no first use leading towards 'no use' finally and will not require introsive inspection or verification. It will lay the found. ation for advancement towards a nuclear free world and will not be discriminatory. It will compel the nations in favour of nuclear weapons cult to rethink Such a denial of bases and war fighting infrastructure facilities to other powers could later be extended to Africa and Latin America. Such a move will compel an improvement of the Non-proliferation Treaty and advance the world towards nuclear free status, which both the US and USSR claim as their ultimate

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Gorbachev's forthcoming visit to China provides a unique opportunity to make a beginning. The Soviet Union by destroying the INF missiles in Asia has gained a moral stature to take up this issue. India and the Soviet Union in the Rajiv-Gorbachev statement have called for a nuclear weapon free world and pending the realisation of that objective for banning the use and threat of use of nuclear weapons.'If Soviet Union, China, India and Pakistan all of which have voted in the UN repeatedly for banning the use and threat of use of nuclear capabilities against each other declare that in their view the use and threat of use of nuclear weapons should be outlawed pending the elimination of nuclear weapons it would lead to a significant change of secu-

rity climate in Asia.

Secondly, the Soviet Union can propose the revival of the talks held during the Carter Administration on limiting forces in the Indian Ocean and offer a zero-zero option for naval deployments (especially nuclear missiles armed weapon carriers) in the Indian Ocean.

Thirdly, since it is perhaps too early to consider convening an Asian security and cooperation conference let us start with an Asian Conference on sustainable development which would include problems of preservation of environment, population limitasion, stepping up food production, energy security taking into account the adverse climatic consequences of Greenhouse effect, and institutionalisation of exchange of developmental information. The US, Canada and Western Europe may also be invited to participate in such a conference. It would give Japan a significant role as the richest country in Asia in a position to contribute to development of the area and thereby make it a global actor.

Fourthly, an attempt should be made to work towards a declaration by Asian nations that no tern torial or border changes would be made except through peaceful means. No doubt Asia has a number of the near the ber of border disputes and territorial claims. One does not underestimate the difficulties to persuade China that it would not use force against Taiwan, of South China sea islands. However, it is worth trying to enlist as many to enlist as many nations as possible for such a declaration. The declaration. Those who do not join will be only a few and their own in the double only a few and their own in the control of t few and their own isolation will generate increasing

(Continued on page 35)

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India Yields in Uruguay Round

CHAKRAVARTHI RAGHAVAN

On April 9, 1989, the Commerce Ministry issued a press note in which (according to a PTI report published in several papers) "the Government has categorically denied that India's stand on patents and intellectual property rights has been 'watered down' in the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations".

The PTI report on the press note (published in the

Times of India, April 10) said:

'India stands for the right of developing countries for preferential treatment to developing countries in multilateral negotiations."

"This takes into account their (developing countries) national policies directed towards giving

their people a better life."

It said the attention of the Ministry "has been drawn to a report in a section of the press that the Indian delegation to the ongoing negotiations in Geneva has watered down India's stand on the patents and intellectual property rights. The Ministry categorically denies it.

"On intellectual property rights, India has consistently and successfully pressed the point, both in Montreal and now in Geneva, that the particular needs of developing countries as well as the concerns of countries at different stages of development ought to be fully taken into account in any negotiations if it is to be acceptable to India."

"Therefore, while recognising the need to reward innovation it is imperative that in view of the special concerns of the developing countries a balance has to be maintained with the developmental, technological and public interest objectives of the developing countries!

Thisposition has been fully maintained. There has be en no goingback on the position taken at Montreal on this vital issue, as alleged in the

report.
"The Minister (sic) said: 'India's primary effort has been to ensure that discussions under GATT on trade-related aspects of intellectual property in the Uruguay round, Conceded (emphasis added) at Druguay round, Conceded (emphasis added) at Punta Del Este, do not in any way prejudice the interests of the developing countreis of the interests of the developing countreis of the developing treis or pre-empt discussions in the world intel-

The author is the Correspondent of Inter Press Service (IPS) News Agency and Chief Editor of the SIING the SUNS, a daily newsletter devoted to South-North issues published from Geneva by the Third World North is published from Geneva by the Third World Network in cooperation with IPS and the

lectual property organisation (WIPO) and elsewhere'."

Perhaps the Commerce Ministry really believes what the unwary may read into the press note, namely there is no change in the Indian Government's position about discussing and negotiating multilaterally issues relating to the "protection" of patents, trade marks and other socalled 'intellectual

property' in the Uruguay Round.

If the Government and the Commerce Ministry really believe this, India is in more serious trouble than even the terms of the agreement which the Commerce Secretary negotiated and agreed to at the meeting of the TNC (April 5-8) in the name of the Commerce Minister. For, the press note implies an ignorance of the fundamental provisions of the GATT and its procedures, of what was actually negotiated and settled at Punta del Este about the Uruguay Round, and of what has happened since then in the negotiations. There is also an unawareness of the political economy of India.

If the Government and the Ministry did not really believe in what they told publicly through the press note, it is like the story in the Mahabharat war when Yudhishtira (who had till then never uttered an untruth) was persuaded to utter those famous words (Aswatthama hatah narova Kunjarova) — that made Drona leave the fight and allow himself to be killed - with Krishna and others blowing their conches to drown out the "narova kunjarova". While there are many would-be Krishnas in our current polity,

there are no Yudhishtiras.

The Times of India report (which apparently provoked the press note) had said that the Cabinet subcommittee decided against taking a firm stand on the issue lest the United States invoke Article (sic) 301 to retaliate'. There are reasons to believe however that the issue never even went up to the Cabinet or the Political Affairs Committee. There are other reports that suggest the instruction or brief to the Commerce Ministry delegation was quite firm, though hedged with the caution that 'we should not be isolated'.

The Government policy (both before and after Punta del Este) had been so clear and so repeatedly reiterated that only any Ministry wishing to change it would have had to take it to the Cabinet. In this case the Commerce Ministry did not take it to the Cabinet. On the other hand the Secretaries Committee appears to have given a firm brief to the Commerce Ministry to mobilise political support among other Third World countries. This meeting appears to have been attended by the Prime Minister's Principal

tary, the Industry Secretary and Secretaries of other concerned Ministries. Unless the Government's Rules of Business have radically changed since the late 70s, when the Secretaries Committee takes a position, only a Ministry that disagrees with it can go to the Cabinet or the concerned Cabinet sub-committee to get the brief changed. Until this is done, it has to carry it out. It would be interesting to know if the Commerce Ministry disagreed with the Committee of Secretaries, whether it did in fact take the issue to the Cabinet, and if so when and on what basis, and what the Cabinet or the CCPA in fact decided. If the issue had never been taken to the Cabinet or the CCPA it would be even more interesting to know what action was taken by the Commerce Ministry on the brief to it by the Committee of Secretaries.

Very rightly, the internal workings of the Cabinet (in view of Parliament's interest in demanding joint responsibility) or of the relationships between Secretaries and Ministers (since the latter for Parliament's benefit must assume constructive responsibility), may not be discussed or inquired in Parliament (except perhaps the Public Accounts Committee). But the press, and perhaps the President, could usefully

inquire into this.

Information so far available suggests that from the outset the Commerce Ministry adopted a defeatist attitude and was more concerned to earn 'good words' from the US and GATT Secretariat, than to mobilise support for safeguarding the Indian position. and reached compromises that are against settled public policy in India. Having done that, it has now adopted the strategy of partial truth in denying the

public implications.

But whatever the explanation for the curious behaviour of the Commerce Ministry and its officials, there should really be no illusions in India, either on the part of private industry (including the indigenous chemicals, pharmaceuticals industries and future ones like biotechnology or Sam Pitroda's telecom, etc.) or in the various concerned Ministries, on what has been agreed to. All the substantive Ministries concerned with this issue will have to think out and evolve a suitable strategy to limit at the minimum the damage caused to Indian industrialisation or deve-

Over the next 20 months, in that portion of the Uruguay Round Multilateral Trade Negotiations (MTNs) in goods, (which is mandated by Part I of the Punta del Este declaration and adopted as a decision of the GATT CONTRACTING PARTIES at Ministrial level, unlike the one on services in Part II) India has now agreed to negotiate, in the Negotiating Group on 'Trips', the provision of adequate standards and principles concerning availability, scope and use of 'trade-related intellectual property rights', the provision (in national laws) of 'effective and appropriate means' for enforcement of such rights, and the provision of procedures for multilateral settlement of disputes between governments, including the applicability of GATT procedures.

It should be noted that India which revised its

Secretary, the Cabinet Secretary and Secretaries of other gopala Ayyangar Committee Report) has refused so far to join the Paris Conventions on Patents, etc. administered by the WIPO) on the ground that is would interfere with India's autonomy in this area Now India has agreed to negotiate in the Uruguay Round issues which would affect its autonomy in a way that none of the conventions administered by WIPO can. The outcome of these Uruguay Round negotiations on Trips, which whatever the Indian quibbling is a GATT negotiation (irrespective of the institutional arrangements at the end about implementation) would involve surrender of the Indian autonomy over a wide area of development policy. will ensure global export monopolies for TNCs of the US and other Industrialised Countries, and will have very far-reaching implications for industrial development2.

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It would be deluding oneself to think that what had been agreed to ensures special and differential treatment for the developing countries (and thus exemption from the rules while enjoying the benefits), or that it ensures free trade in technology or. would promote technological development.

It is far better for the ministries and departments of Government dealing with the substance of these issues, as well as the Indian private sector not tied to TNCs, and for Indian think tanks not tied to or propagating US interests, to think out a strategy and tactics of how to undo the damage caused by the Indian negotiators rather than pretend that no damage has been caused or that India has won a great victory as some Indian officials are claiming and propagating in India and Geneva.

All that is left open (after the Geneva TNC meeting) is a somewhat dubious decision, that has no legal status in the GATT, that the institutional aspects of implementation of the multilateral rules and principles to be negotiated in 'Trips would be decided by the Ministers meeting at the end of the Uruguay Round on the occasion of a Special Session of The CONTRACTING PARTIES.

The term CONTRACTING PARTIES, when used with all the letters in upper case, means the joint action of the signatories to the GATT under Article XXV of the General Agreement 'for the purpose or giving effect to those provisions of this Agree ment which involve joint action'. Depending on the issue involved, by a simple majority or by a major rity of two-thirds of the votes cast and simple majority of the membership.

It is 'dubious' because (as pointed out already), the 'goods' part of the Uruguay Round MTNs (and Trips is a part of it), is a GATT 'decision, unlike that on services which was launched by the Ministers meeting separately and as a political decision, and hence needing some final action at the end of the round in regard to its legal status and

international implementation. Anyone with some acquaintance and knowledge the perovices of the negotiating history of the Punta del Este part laration and how it was split into Part I and Part II and Why II and why, and how Part III (about international implementation) implementation) was put in and adopted separately by the Ministers by the Ministers, would be a little more wary about

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennal and eGangotri and use of trade-related intellectual property in the Green Room consultations when

making in the Green Room consultations when In fact Director-General Dunkel GATT Director-General Dunkel negotiations could be carried out on all aspects in the Round, with the final implementation left at the end, Jamaica very rightly asked how a decision of the GATT CONTRACTING PARTIES at Ministerial level at Punta del Este could be modified or altered or changed by mere officials meeting in the TNC, which in any event had no legal status in GATT. (Before Montreal, Jamaica had challenged the GATT Secretariat on this in relation to efforts to change the GATT system and dispute settlement procedures through a mere decision of TNCs even at the Ministerial level, and the Secretariat had been forced to provide the legal opinion that only the GATT bodies could do this.)

No one in the 'green room consultations' picked it up, not even the Indian officials, who had been mesmerised by Dunkel and his entourage. Jamaica and others did not pursue it either, since they were afraid in the mood of capitulation that prevailed, the major Third World countries would have agreed to hold a GATT Council meeting immediately

thereafter and endorse everything.

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Lest we be accused of citing selectively, the relevant portion of the TNC decision on April 8 are given below in full (but wifh emphasis added for some words):

Trade-related aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, including Trade in Counterfeit Goods

1. Ministers recognise the importance of the successful conclusion of the multilateral negotiations on trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights, including trade in counterfeit goods, that were initiated by the decision of the CONTRACTING PARTIES at Punta del Este.

Ministers recall the relevant provisions of the Punta del Este Declaration, including the objectives of strengthening the role of GATT and of bringing about a wider coverage of world trade under agreed, effective and enforceable multilateral disciplines, as well as the general principles governing the negotiations set out in I.B. of the Punta del Este Declaration, notably paragraphs (iv)-(vii).

Ministers agree that the outcome of the negotiations is not prejudged and that these negotiations are without prejudice to the views of partitional of participants concerning the institutional aspects of the international implementation of the results of the negotiations in this area, which of the D. decided pursuant to the final paragraph of the Punta del Este Declaration.

Ministers agree that negotiations of this subject shall continue in the Uruguay Round and shall encompass the following issues:

(a) the applicability of the basic principles of the GATT and of relevant international intellectual property agreements of conven-

(b) the provision of adequate standards and principles concerning the availability, scope

(c) the provision of effective and appropriate means for the enforcement of trade-related intellectual property rights, taking into account differences in national legal systems; (d) the provision of procedures for the multilateral prevention and settlement of disputes between governments, including the applicability of GATT procedures;

(e) transitional arrangements aiming at the fullest participation in the results of the

negotiations.

5. Ministers agree that in the negotiations consideration will be given to concerns raised by participants relating to the underlying policy objectives of their national systems for the protection of intellectual property.

6. In respect of 3 (d) above, Ministers emphasise the importance of reducing tensions in this area by reaching strengthened commitments to resolve disputes on trade-related intellectual property

issues through multilateral procedures.

The negotiations shall also comprise the development of a multilateral framework of principles, rules and disciplines dealing with international trade in counterfeit goods.

8. The negotiations should be conductive to a mutually supportive relationship between GATT and WIPO as well as other relevant international

organisations.

It should be noted that the term "trade-related intellectual property rights" does not figure in the text of the Punta del Este mandate, but only in its 'title's It is the only remnant of what the US had sought on this issue. The only relevant words in the mandate are 'distortions' and 'impediments' to trade. The much wider term, 'trade-related intellectual property rights', has only now been put into the mid-term package agreement.

To fully grasp what India (and other Third World countries) gave away (not only the house, but the kitchen and the sink too as the American expression goes) here in Geneva now, one has to go back to the preparations and negotiations before Punta del Este, the Colombian-Swiss draft (that the US had backed) on this issue and the mandate as it finally emerged. This is set out below (with emphasis

added to bring out the difference. Box p. 18):

The square brackets around the entire Swiss-Colombian text was because Colombia and other Third World countries which had negotiated before Punta del Este the entire text for the Ministerial declaration, neverthless had said issues of principles were involved about including the Trips, Trims and Services negotiations in GATT and hence only Ministers could decide it. Both the Trims and Trips texts were considerably changed before including it in the GATT MTNs at Punta del Este, and Services put as a parallel exercise outside.

There are two other paras in the Punta del Este mandate, relating to the question of multilateral rules and disciplines to deal with trade in counterfeit goods, and the assertion about the maintenance of the competence of WIPO and other international

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Swiss-Colombian Draft

In order to reduce distortions and impediments to international trade arising from the lack of adequate and effective protection of intellectual property rights, in negotiations shall aim:

to promote a more effective and generalised application of existing international standards in

intellectual property matters;

- to ensure that measures and procedures to enforce intellectual property rights do not themselves become barriers to legitimate trade; and

- to clarify and elaborate rules and disciplines

with respect to these matters.

In order to reduce the distortions and impediments to international trade, and

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taking into the account the need to promote effective and adequate protection of intellectual property rights, and

to ensure that measures and procedures to enforce intellectual property rights do not themselves become barriers to legitimate trade.

the negotiations shall aim to clarify GATT provisions and elaborate as appropriate new rules and disciplines.

organisations dealing with the substantial issues in the TRIPs mandate.

It would probably be true to say that if India and others had stood firm at Punta del Este, the US might have yielded on this as well as on the investment issues and these would not have been included in the mandate. However, it is also true that the US would have brought up the same issues and concepts (technology is a service) in the services negotiations, which by definition was outside the GATT. One of the factors that weighed with some Third World negotiators at Punta del Este was that the negotiations (on Trips and Trims) inside GATT necessarily would restrict its scope. But whatever the merits of this assessment, to suggest, as the press note does, that something had been conceded at Punta del Este but has now been saved cannot stand a moment's scrutiny in this context. If what has been saved now is the special treatment for developing countries, it has been put into the Punta del Este mandate in better and clearer terms; their selective citation can only weaken and not strengthen the mandate.

As is clear by a comparison of the Swiss-Colombian draft and what finally emerged (as a result of negotiations between Brazil and India, backed by 11 others, and the US), the mandate given is very different from what the US had sought. The 'judgement' in the Swiss-Colombian text that lack of adequate and effective protection of IPRs is the cause of trade distortions and is an 'impediment' to international trade was eliminated in the mandate.

In the Swiss-Colombian draft, the mandate to the negotiators was spelt out as the promotion of 'a more effective and generalised application of existing international standards' and ensuring that measures and procedures to enforce IPRs do not themselves become barriers to legitimate trade. In the Punta del Este mandate, these are merely factors to be 'taken into account', and have the same status the other factors like the need to ensure that enforcement of IPRs do not themselves become barriers to legitimate trade.

And, while the Swiss-Colombian draft had called for clarification and elaboration of rules and disciplines to achieve the two 'aims' of the mandate, the Punta del Este declaration had called for clarification of GATT provisions and, elaboration of new rules and disciplines only as 'appropriate'. Also, while the US and others are now seeking new norms where there are no international norms and for enhancement of existing norms, even the Swiss-Colombian draft (which had been backed by the US but was dropped from the mandate) only spoke of more effective and generalised application of 'existing international standards'.

Courts in domestic matters may not take too much notice of negotiating history if the language of the legislation is clear enough, which was also why the negotiators from the US had been forced to seek 'clarification' of language and in effect rewriting it. But negotiators and diplomats can't forget it or

hope others would have forgotten it.

As a recent GATT panel ruling, in a dispute involving the US and EEC, has brought out there is nothing in GATT requiring a country to provide IPR protection. The panel had ruled that when countries take trade policy measures to protect IPRs, and makes use of the provisions in Article XX permitting specified general exceptions to GATT rules, it has to act in a particular manner, including the requirement that imports and domestic products should be treated alike. If anything, the Punta del Este mandate could be interpreted to mean (as Third World countries, including India, had been contending till now) that the applicable GATT provisions should be clarified so that measures to protect IPRs do not become impediments to trade or distort trade.

In two years of negotiations, this difference in interpretation deadlocked the negotiations. India and a large number of Third World countries took the stand that the mandate did not permit of negotiating norms and standards, leave aside their adequacy, that all these matters (under the applicable international regime, namely the Paris Union Conventions on Patents, etc. and the Berne and UNESCO Conventions on Copyright) were matters for national determination based on a balance (to be determined by the national authorities) between rights of property holders and public interest.

The Indian position was stated clearly, before Montreal, at the meeting of the Trips negotiating group July (5-8, 1988). At that meeting the had abandoning its ambivalent position till then, had

even beyond the US. Two portions of the Indian statement are worth quoting to understand the vast difference in that position and that accepted in Geneva (and now position to be a victory for India). This is what

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the Indian delegate then said: "The EEC proposal also states that a GATT agreement should actively encourage its widespread signature and the wider adherence to international conventions on intellectual property. In this regard, we would like to know whether it is the function of these negotiations to persuade or encourage states to adhere to a certain specified level of standard for protection of intellectual property, that is, to question the appropriateness of the existing level or nature of IP protection incorporated in national laws. This is going far beyond the question of appropriate or adequate enforcement of IP laws and regulations at the border.

"We cannot agree that substantive national laws and provisions should be questioned on ground that there are trade related aspects. In fact, the criterion of being trade-related occurs nowhere in the mandate of our Group, but only in the rubric. Hence it is not a valid criterion for our work as the EEC paper assumes to be." (emphasis added).

(What the Indian negotiators have done in April this year is to undo this deficiency — from the viewpoint of the US and EEC — and put what was in the rubric or title, which in all legislations carry no weight, into the text.)

After dealing with other aspects of the EEC proposals, and after citing the mandate, the Indian dele-

gate had added:

Unfortunately, a number of participants appear intent upon disregarding the very precise and clear mandate to deal with all aspects of intellectual property rights...on grounds that these issues are 'trade-related' or that they are only dealing with 'trade-related aspects'. The reference to the possibility of 'a multilateral framework of principles and rules and disciplines' only occurs in the second indent in 'dealing with international trade in counterfeit goods, taking into account work already undertaken in the GATF'. We maintain therefore that those participants who now wish to, and indeed appear to insist upon, negotiating socalled comprehensive framework dealing with all aspects of intellectual property rights are simply not being faithful to the negotiating mandate...it is they, not we, upon whom the burden of proof rests to demonstrate how their proposals are in a mandate. With record with the negotiating mandate. With regard to the first indent, we have continued to ed to maintain that the scope of our work is much partial that the scope of our work is much narrower, and intended primarily to clarify existing GATT provisions. Indeed, it would be peertinent to peertinent to point out that a draft formulation circulated by a circulated before Punta del Este, supported by a number of countries (the reference is to the Swiss-Colombian draft), specifically stated that negotiations shall aim to promote a more effec-

presented its proposals which in some respects went tive and generalised application of existing international standard application of existing international standards in intellectual property matters. However, this formulation was subsequently discarded in favour of the mandate as it presently stands.

> To suggest, as the press note does, that there has been no change in the Indian stand is difficult to maintain in the face of this position evocated by India very clearly at the Negotiating Group, at the stage when the group was trying to formulate the recommendations for the Montreal meeting. It was not an off-the-cuff remark either.

> Despite the claim in the press note, the words public' interest are not found in the agreement on Trips. These words, in the draft of paragraph 5 of the TNC agreement, was eliminated at the US instance.

> A comparison of the text as has now emerged, with the 'Ozal text'3 and what the US had put privately circulated on December 8-9 at Montreal is quite instructive. The text that the US had put forward at Montreal, after the deadlock in Trips created by India and Brazil, and on which it had sought support from some of its Third World allies, was in one or two respects better than what has now been agreed to. Incidentally, that US text had been rejected at Montreal by Singapore at the level of its Minister.

The Agreed text provides that "negotiations ... shall encompass the following issues". The Ozal text had said "negotiations...in particular should address the following issues". The US text had then said: "They (Ministers) identified, in particular, the following essential issues for negotiations." The words 'shall encompass' is much stronger than 'should address' in the Ozal text or 'identified...for negotiations' in the US text, both of which were rejected by Indian negotiators at Montreal.

On the question of norms, the text now agreed to "of the provision of adequate standards and principles concerning the availability, scope and use of trade-related intellectual property rights" The Ozal text was much weaker and spoke only of "specification", and the same term was used in the

US text also.

On the technological and development issues, the agreed text now provides: "In the negotiations consideration will be given to concerns raised by participants related to the underlying public policy objectives of their national systems for the protection of intellectual property, including developmental and technological objectives" In the Ozal text (which India had rejected for its other provisions), this formulation read: "These negotiations should take account not only of trade policy considerations but also of relevant developmental and technological objectives; they should also takedue account of other relevant public interest objectives." Trade policy, technological and developmental objectives were all put on the same footing. Now trade policy is a mandatory negotiating issue, while technological and developmental objectives are only to be given consideration.

As for the relationship of GATT negotiations with other international instruments, the agreed text now merely says "the negotiations should be

conducive to a mutually supportive relationship between GATT and WIPO as well as other international instruments". Both the Ozal text and the US text, on the other hand, had these additional "The Ministers also confirmed that the results of the negotiations should not conflict with obligations under existing intellectual conventions."

From the very first meeting of the Trips negotiating group in 1987. India had resisted US demands and had refused to negotiate questions of substantive norms and standards and principles in the Uruguay Round. This continued to be the Indian position (publicly at least) until at least the last round of consultations in March held by

In the entire post-Montreal consultations, Dunkel had adopted a power-ploy: promote US-EEC accord (through their bilateral talks) on agriculture, and on that basis thrust on the Third World a package tinvolving the three other subjects of Montreal textiles, safeguards and Trips) and split the Third World unity that had developed. This tactic of was foreseen from the beginning. regrettably New Delhi did not take steps to counter Rather its officials showed a pathetic faith in Dunkel and his Indian aides. At first they tried to influence Dunkel, and when it failed compromised with the US on the latter's terms.

Dunkel, in presenting his 'compromise text' just before Easter, ignored the Third World views (which since Montreal had become stronger on Trips and had resulted in a joint text that was presented by Egypt and with Indian support). After Easter, at the meeting of the informal Third World group in GATT, India was among those who agreed that the Dunkel text could not be a basis for negotiations and that they should not agree to negotiate standards and

norms in the Round.

The Trips issue was one of those where a deadlock had developed at the Montreal mid-term review meeting, and after some initial errors in negotiating tactics (of the Commerce Secretary), Dinesh Singh changed the negotiators, and took a strong position4. The Indian position attracted considerable support among other Third World countries (to the surprise of the Minister and some Commerce Ministry officials who had gone to Montreal believing they were isolated). It was felt, at Montreal, and after Montreal, that India could and should make an effort and mobilise political support.

After Montreal however, the Commerce Ministry made no effort to mobilise other Third World nations. Indian Ministers and officials were busy visiting Washington, Brussels, Bangkok and Tokyo and even Davos, but had no time to go and concert in capitals that had taken a similar stand at Punta del Este, Geneva, or Montreal. Even if India had done no more than standing firm and had made this known in other Third World capitals, the purpose would have been served. The Third World was in fact already following the Indian lead at Montreal. But the strange Indian tactics demoralised the others who were trying to follow the lead.

But soon after Montreal, the Commerce Ministry's

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGangotri Geneva, talked to GATT officials and went back to conduct the same disinformation about Indian isolation, which they had done before Punta del Este also in order to pressura India to yield to the US on services. By mid-February and early March, after one of the Commerce Secretary's trips to Bangkok, where he appears to have sounded out the Thais (who inside the ASEAN are the weakest on this issue), a judgement was apparently made in the Commerce Ministry that India would not find many countries ready to sunport India in resisting the US and should seek compromises.

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By late February, it was common talk in Geneva amongst ASEAN delegates, that in fact some of their capitals had been advised by Indian officials that India would be taking a 'pragmatic' and 'flexible' view. This had confused those of the ASEAN who were taking a tough stand on Trips, and they conveyed their concerns to responsible Indian officials: who presumably reported it back to Delhi. In the light of subsequent events, it almost seemed to be a case where some part of the Government in India was trying to weaken India's stand and compromise with the US by propagating the view of Indian isolation, and ensuring this isolation by making

others think India was weakening.

This was happening even when Third World delegates in Geneva were trying to find a common position to oppose the US. In the light of all this, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that the Commerce Ministry and its officials were determined to 'compromise' with the US - perhaps to gain some short-term pre-election advantages with the US, even at the cost of India's future interests, and were discouraging any mobilisation of a broad front

After Montreal, in February, Geneva negotiators from concerned Third World countries met first at Talloires, a resort place near Annecy in neighbouring France, and later held a number of meetings in Geneva. They had evolved a common position paper which received very large support at an informal Third World group meeting. India not only actively participated in these efforts but fully subscribed to it. But no efforts were made by New Delhi to mobilise political support in orher capitals. Rather the defeatist view of Indian isolation was embraced, and Indian officials trying to take the other (and officially sanctioned) line of the Govern ment were sought to be frozen out of the decision making and negotiating processes.

In February, the Indian delegate to GATT, Shrirang P. Shukla, had been reassigned back to Delhi (a curious decision to pull out a key official right in the midst of the delicate post Montreal negotions. tiations). The GATT post was left in charge of a relatively junior official who had arrived in Geneva only in Neverthan only in November, but who despite these handicaps appears to have done reasonably well in carrying out his brief in the consultations. But such a junior official could not establish rapport in such a short time with series a short time with senior delegates in Geneva or have policy-level influence and carry clout in the Ministy at New Delhi at New Delhi.

All of this could be attributed to the normal CC-0. In Public Domain. Gurukul Kangri Collection, Haridwar

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been responsible. But whatever the truth, other countries which had been accoustomed for the last four years, before and after the launching of the Round, to leadership from the Indian delegation and which, after Montreal, had been counting on this to thwart US-EEC designs on gaining via GATT on industrial property privileges that could not be secured through other international negotiations, could not ignore these signals. In fact the common question that other Indian diplopmats (not dealing with GATT) or those not connected with Government were getting was whether the shifting from Geneva of the key negotiator who had mobilised the Third World and failure to fill the post, and the talk encouraged by some in Delhi about 'flexibility' and 'pragmatism' did not signify a change of policy ond direction in New Delhi. As already noted, it was common talk among ASEAN diplomats in Geneva of the talk in their capitals about Indian flexibility.

consultations by Dunkel The rounds of were staffed by a senior official who came from some of them, with all the daily contacts and discussions left to the man on the In February, Dunkel went to Delhi his Indian Special Assistant, on his way back from the Hirohito funeral in Tokyo, and met with the Commerce Secretary and the Commerce Minister. None of the officials involved in the Ministry, or other sections of the Government directly concerned with intellectual property issues, appears to have been brought into the discussions. Dunkel and his entourage apparently 'impressed' those whom they met that India was 'isolated'. There was also the disinformation campaign through the US mission

bulletins and the Western media.

After Dunkel's return from Delhi, and while he was travelling to Buenos Aires — to influence Latin American Cairns members — his deputy, M. G. Mathur, was presented by Colombia, which had chaired an informal Third World Group meeting in the absence of Brazil, with a joint position paper of the Third World. This belied the propaganda of the US and GATT Secretariat about the minority of opposition in the Third World to the Trips issue.

At Montreal there had been some talk of a 'third approach on the Trips issue in the Uruguay Round, and Dunkel perhaps suggested in Delhi that he could get such a compromise if India would be

more flexible.

Commerce Minister Dinesh Singh at Montreal had presented proposals on the penultimate day, in the consultati consultations there. These had been unofficially available inside the socalled 'green room consultations' to other delegations. They had received wide Suport from the Third World countries even before Dinesh Single the Third World countries This had Dinesh Singh had formally presented them. This had clearly called had formally presented them. clearly called for parallel negotiations on these issues in WIPO TIMES Parallel negotiations on these issues in WIPO, UNESCO and UNCTAD. This was not a third treat. a third track, UNESCO and UNCTAD. This coutside outside approach, but parallel negotiations

The socalled 'third track' approach was a reference

bureaucratic functioning of the work the something vices Rut this is a richer disquieting evidence that something vices Rut this is a richer disquieting evidence that something vices Rut this is a richer disquieting evidence that something vices Rut this is a richer disquieting evidence that something vices Rut this is a richer disquieting evidence that something vices Rut this is a richer disquieting evidence that something vices Rut this is a richer disquieting evidence that something vices Rut this is a richer disquieting evidence that something vices Rut this is a richer disquieting evidence that something vices Rut this is a richer disquieting evidence that something vices Rut this is a richer disquieting evidence that something vices Rut this is a richer disquieting evidence that something vices Rut this is a richer disquieting evidence that something vices Rut this is a richer disquieting evidence that something vices Rut this is a richer disquieting evidence that something vices Rut this is a richer disquieting evidence that something vices Rut this is a richer disquieting evidence that something vices Rut this is a richer disquieting evidence that the richer disquieti negotiations launched at Punta del Este is not a decision of the GATT CONTRACTING PARTIES, as the negotiations in 'goods', including on that for clarifying GATT provisions on intellectual property and investment. Thus calling the services negotiations as a 'second track', with the issues of implemention and institutional framework left to be decided has a rationale. But stretching it to include all the issues being negotiated under Part I appears to be based on a misunderstanding fostered by Dunkel, and based on a wrong precedent, namely the Tokyo Round, whose conclusions had to be incorporated into GATT at the end in 1979. The Tokyo Round was not launched as a decision of the GATT CONTRACTING PARTIES. But the Uruguay Round, insofar as it releates to goods, is a decision of the GATT CONTRACTING PARTIES.

The post-Montreal position of the Third World presented to Dunkel not only pursued the line taken by Dinesh Singh, but specifically brought in (for these parallel negotiations) the 'corporate practices' in the area of patent licensing, etc. which too distort trade and/or act as impediments. This had been formally sent to Dunkel as 'contribution' from the Third World countries, after it had been endorsed at a meeting by everyone present (except for Hong

Kong and South Korea).

The consultations and negotiations starting from March 31 have to be viewed against this background. The Indian official team was led by Commerce Secretary, A.N. Varma, and consisted of Joint Secretary in the Ministry, Anwar Hoda, Joint Secretary in Industry Ministry, Ganesan (whose name did not appear in the first list and was not apparently present in the initial consultation), a Deputy Secretary in the Commerce Ministry (who was the No 2 man in Geneva till December), P.S. Randhawa, and the acting Permanent Delegate to GATT, Ashok Sajjanhar. Randhawa was not at Punta del Este and Sajjanhar was not at Montreal. The only one at both places was Hoda; but at neither place had he been involved in the Trips negotiations.

· Given the issues involved, and related to the mandate of Punta del Este, two of those who had negotiated the mandate at Punta, namely Shukla (who on return to India was made Secretary for Family Planning in the Health Ministry, a very curious way to run government business and provide continuity in a key area) and Muchkund Dubey, Secretary in Office, were not included. Both the Foreign these had also played a key role in recovering ground at Montreal and mobilising support from other countries (after the Commerce Secretary in the first two days of negotiations had lost ground).

In the pre-TNC consultations, and the ones after the TNC began, Dunkel adopted the same power-policy, as in the consultations he had conducted since Montreal. He concentrated on agriculture. where the US and EEC (after montreal) had reached bilateral understanding on long-term issues, and encouraged them to find some accommodation on short-term issues also. On this last, the stumbling age set-aside programme and not bring additional acreage under cultivation, and the FEC inability to agree to restrict its export subsidy programmes. In the final compromise both were omitted, leaving each free. After this Dunkel arranged consultations in such a way as to pressure the Third World to yield on Trips, and after that took up textiles and safeguards and got procedural decisions. So much for the faith of Indian officialdom on Dunkel and his advisors.

On April 1 or 2 (since the pre-TNC intense 'green room' consultations took place, with very short breaks almost continuously, it is difficult to be exact on the dates) when the Trips issue was taken up and the Dunkel text was given a first reading with general comments, Brazil (in accord with the general views at the informal Third World group meeting) was sharply critical of Dunkel's text on Trips, comparing his entire text as a table with one leg (that on Trips) longer than the other three and hence inherently unstable. India's Commerce Secretary Varma spoke conciliatingly about Dunkel and said the mandate did not call for negotiations on substantive norms and standards for intellectual property protection, but that it was willing to consider trade-related' standards and norms. (The green room consultations are private and there are no records. But more than one Third World participant present has conformed Varma's remarks).

At best, this was a misreading of the Trips mandate, confusing the title 'trade-related intellectual property rights' with what is spelt out in the mandate and restricted to 'distortions' and 'impediments' to trade. But given the fact that till early February 1989, India had been making a clear distinction between the title of the mandate and its text, others saw a shift in the Indian position. As the final outcome suggests, it seemed to indicate the emerging Indian position. It raised some doubts about how strong India was, and several Third World countries privately wondered whether India was softening its position.

In that day's consultations, Egypt which had been arguing the Trips case did not say anything. President Mubarak was at that time in Washington, and the Egyptian Geneva negotiators did not want to give an opportunity to President Bush to raise the issue with Mubarak (who had not been briefed) and get a commitment at that level.

When the Indian officials were queried on their statements (about willingness to negotiate 'traderelated norms and standards'), they said privately that there was no change in India's stand but that there were no 'takers' for the Indian position. On this basis, and on an 'assessment' that it was 'isolated', India adopted a curious strategy or tactics. This made sense only if the Government had decided to compromise with the US and find the best solution possible, and rationalise it to the public and the Indian business community. But since the substantive issues involved concerned other Ministries (Industry, Science and Tecnology, Health, etc.), the question arises whether they too agreed to this, and if so whether they did so on

block was US inability to agree to early Arya Ramai Foundation Chasini and easignsments' provided by the Indian negotiators from Geneva about the 'isolation' There are any number of other questions that can be answered only in India.

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At the second consultations on Trips by Dunkel on April 3, Brazil tabled a number of amend. ments to the Dunkel text to bring it in line with the joint third world paper. Brazil did just that Dunkel at first refused to accept amendments, but was forced to yield. Yet instead of backing the amendments, India, and others, began responding to the Dunkel text (just as India had done in the first two days at Montreal when it began commenting

on the Ozal text).

The Brazilian amendments received support at that evening's meeting of the informal Third World group. (Soon after Easter, when the group had met to consider Dunkel's first draft, it had been agreed that during the TNC meeting and the consultations to precede it, the group would meet every evening regularly. It had been known that Dunkel and his advisors tried to discourage it because of the pressures it would mount against him.) It was then decided that the meeting next day (April 4) would be devoted to the Trips issue. The clear intention was to get wider support for the Brazilian amendments (from the 14 who had originally put in the Third World paper and had got Egypt to present it in the green room, and as many others of the informal group as might be willing).

On April 4, Dunkel presented a new text on Trips, leaning even more in favour of the US. Many Third World delegates had seen the scheduled evening meeting of the Third World group that But India advised Brazil evening as crucial. (which chairs the informal group, after Shukla lest Geneva in February) not to hold the planned meet ing on Trips lest it 'irritate' Dunkel as if pleasing Dunkel is more important than safeguarding Indian and other Third World national interests. Immediately after Dunkel presented his new text, there had been an informal impromptu meeting at the GATI of those present in the consultations, and the view emerged that the new text was even more retrograde and participants in the green room consultations should speak up in the informal group meeting and make others understand what was going on. India had not attended this impromptu meeting.

When that evening (April 4) the informal Third World Group meeting was anyhow held, whether due to a genuine belief that it would not be held of to make its own point, India did not attend.

The absence of India from both these meetings, fuelled the doubts of everyone about the Indian stand, and made everyone try to protect his flanks and not be 'isolated'. Private remarks from some Latin American diplomats suggest that from this, as also Varma's remark in the consultations, gradical concluded that (with the consultations) concluded that (unlike in Montreal where a joint Brazilian-Indian Brazilian-Indian strategy foiled the US), in General Brazil would be a strategy foiled the US). Brazil would be alone, and could not resist and block the process. block the processes alone.

India made it a point to attend the next day's meeting of the Third World group to clarify it was

standards in GATT. While it helped somewhat to standards it was not enough to dispel the ori-

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Dunkel got an even more restricted group to consult on Trips and this was held in the room of his deputy, M. G. Mathur, and chaired by him. This sarcastically became known, among Third World delegates, as the 'black room' consultations.) Dunkel called in some like India, Brazil, etc. and Third World who might either others from the acquiesce with the US position or remain silent. This is the usual style in GATT. In the consultations the main discussions and negotiations were by Brazil and India. Perhaps this made the Indian officials feel they were isolated. If so, it was an isolation to which they themselves had largely contributed, by their failure to mobilise support politically after Montreal, and by their tactics and behaviour after coming to Geneva.

When the US and EEC took a tougher stance, India and Brazil yielded. There is some reason to believe that Brazil (on the basis of information received by it from Delhi) changed its stance because it was convinced the Indian negotiators were going to compromise. When the US refused to remove square brackets around some formulations, as for example, the brackets around 'adequate' before 'standards', instead of maintaining the square brackets,

India agreed to remove it.

Brazil, according to some who were present, also agreed to some formulations that India did not like. Indian officials gave this as an explanation why they accepted it. But it was not clear why they did not say 'no' even if Brazil had said yes. The text that emerged finally was an ad referendum text, committing no one, since the Indian delegation put a reserve

That night (April 7-8), the Indian delegates apparently spoke on the phone with New Delhi from inside the GATT building, and perhaps from the room of one of the officials. Perhaps due to this conversation (which without their knowledge could have been overheard by others), Western delegates were asking their other Indian friends whether Varma would last in the Ministry and what would happen? However, on April 8, the reserve was

It is easy to be wise after events. But there is every reason to believe that if India had taken an open and public stand, and had tried to mobilise support, it would have had 10 or 14 countries behind it. The Indianate the miniit. The Indian officials appear to have, at the minimum admin officials appear to have, at the minimum administration of blocked the mum, adopted a defeatist mentality and blocked the possibility. possibility of an emerging coalition against the US. If they had really decided to compromise, they could have at least the second textiles. have at least got a price for it, such as on textiles. But they did not get it either.

The green room' process means that only a few of Third Warner process means that only a few of the Third World countries are present inside, and each speaks for itself. But India (with Brazil) could difficult to ride a group, and it would have been Having failed difficult to ride rough-shod over them. Having failed to mobilise support for its own stand, and having discouraged apport for its own stand, and having discouraged the Third World group to solidify 'lest

opposed to discussion of substantive horms and the in GATT. While it helped somewhat to they were isolated to understand this except as a case of rationalising

on the basis of an isolation created by them.

The fact that several countries would have joined India, whenever a full plenary or heads of delegations meet was held, was shown by some of the statements made at the final TNC on April 8 -Colombia, Cuba, Nicaragua and Tanzania. All of them bitterly, Cuba in blunt language, complained about lack of 'transparency', about the rewriting of the Punta mandate (Colombia and Cuba) and refusal to accept the impediments to acquisition of technology (Cuba).

True, the Uruguay Round process would have been delayed or blocked. But in the Uruguay Round India and other countries are not 'takers' or 'demanders', but those who have to make concessions and mortgage their future to the US, EEC and their transnational corporation interests. As against this, however, must be weighed the fact that at an informal meeting outside the GATT building, of some key Third World countries (on April 5-6), when the idea of repeating Montreal and blocking negotiations was broached, some of the Latin American Cairns members (but 'not Brazil) said it was difficult to do so in Geneva, where both the US and EEC agreed on agriculture, unlike in Montreal.

But by then doubts caused by the stand of Indian negotiators had convinced others that they could do little. In any event, India could not have expected that as in Montreal, the Latin Cairns members would object without India having to do it openly. The story could well have been different if India in January or February had tried to mobilise political support in other capitals and had held a meeting of Ministers from key countries. But this was not done on the basis that such a meeting would be useful only if its success was assured in advance.

In the final plenary (held behind closed doors as all GATT meetings are, with texts of statements relayed to the media by the GATT press office), the Indian Commerce Secretary, Amar Nath Varma, said for the record that India was 'gratified' that a way had been found to bridge the gap between differing views of participants, and "we hope that on the basis of this text we would 'be able to participate actively

in the forthcoming negotiations".

Varma then went on to say (according to the writ-

ten text):

"It has been our view that the Punta del Este Declaration does not include consideration of standards and principles for intellectual property rights.

"Even so (emphasis added), we have agreed to allow the multilateral process to move forward with the objective of strengthening the multi-

lateral system."

The Punta del Este mandate's talk about strengthening the multilateral system has been made in a wider and different context, and relating it to Trips suggests that India accepts that trade policy and GATT disciplines have to include this area of intellectual property protection.

(At his press conference after the FNC on the night

intellectual property saying such rights 'formed part of the society's "goods" and was exchanged, and therefore there is need to find rules in terms of the trading system'. As for the paragraph about 'consideration' being given to developmental, technological and public policy objectives - on which India and others have set so much store - Dunkel did not even include it among the operational parts of the

Varma went on to say that duplication between international organisations 'must be avoided', and the relationship of the outcome of negotiations with GATT must be decided at the end of the Uruguay

Round.

But this is like trying to grasp the elephant by its tail. Do Indian officials seriously think that at the end of the round, when a few carrots could be offered by the US and EEC to smaller partners, India would be less isolated and could resist the subject being part of GATT and that it could then command the more than one-third vote to resist amendments to the GATT or block a code

Perhaps, an explanation for the Indian behaviour is the prospect of S. 301 proceedings under the US Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act, and the threat of 'unilateral trade measures' that the US has been holding out (and which it has already taken against Brazil). This is not something to be brushed aside. But the more one now yields to the US, the

more will be similar pressures in future.

Much has been made of the fact that by agreeing to the compromises, the Uruguay Round processes have been enabled to go on. This raises the question whether India or other Third World countries had gained anything in the other parts of the package, or would gain anything in the Uruguay Round to war-

rant their compromise on Trips.

After the Trips text was negotiated in the restricted consultations, there were prolonged consultations on textiles and safeguards. On neither of these, nor on what had been negotiated at Montreal, did India or other Third World countries gain anything. They even lost ground. In any event no gains in these areas could compensate for what has been agreed to in Trips. But the failure to get a 'freeze' in further textile restrictions could have been used to create a block on Trips too. This tactics too was not pursued.

In other parts of the package, in agriculture the domestic agricultural policies and government support of all countries are on the table for negotiations in respect of 'long-term reform'. The special position of Third World countries in terms of government measures of assistance (which for industrial nations are to be progressively reduced) to encourage agricultural and rural development as an integral part of the development programmes of Third World coun-

tries has been recognised.

This may be a gain, but the modalities to give effect to this are yet to be negotiated; and thus depends on negotiators and what stand major countries can take (and judged by Trips will take, since the US has also an important export interest in

of April 8, Dunkel justified GATT involve frem foundation continue and featisfactory modalities are not reached and if the long-term reform rules are put into GATT India would certainly be worse off.

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textiles, the procedural decision calls for beginning in April 1989 negotiations to reach agreement, within the time-frame of the Uruguay Round "on modalities for the integration of this sector into GATT". The only gain was the omission of the word 'eventual' before 'integration' that was in the Punta del Este text.

The modalities for the process of integration 'should inter alia cover', the phasing out of restrictions under the MFA and other restrictions on textiles and clothing not consistent with GATT rules and disciplines, and the time span for such a process of integration, and the progressive character of this process, which should commence following the conclusion of the

negotiations in 1990.

But the use of 'inter alia' weakens the subsequent portions, and would in fact enable the US and EEC to attempt to continue the MFA for a very long period into the future under one form or another. US trade representative, Mrs Carla Hills, is on record (early in March) as saying the US wants the present global system of trade in textiles (which is the MFA) to be integrated into GATT. This could mean instead of being a derogation from GATT as now, it should be part of GATT. Immediately after Montreal, and in reporting on it to the European Parliament, the then EC Commissioner Willy de Clercq had said that the EEC would insist on an MFA-5 after MFA-4. The EEC stand is tied to its 1992 single market, and the decisions on it in respect of Textiles are scheduled to be taken only in 1991 by the Commission.

Third World countries had pressed for a freeze on further MFA restrictions. Not only did they not get it, but there is now a language which could be interpreted to mean they have to relax their own restrictions on textile imports. It says in the operative part ... all participants shall endeavour to improve the trade situation paving the way for the integration of the textiles and clothing sector into GATT", the freeze if any, is on a 'best endeavour' basis, but one to which 'all participants' are to be committed

Pakistan, which with India had been pushing the textiles issue, had at one stage appeared willing to block the package on the textiles issue, but it had no

supporters.

What of the future?

It has to be clearly understood that the Trips negotiations is not one of those issues and disputes among the industrialised countries and major trading nations (as for example, the negotiations on agriculture or subsidies) where the Third World is a subsidiary and second. diary and secondary party. It is one squarely between the North and the South.

Trips is an issue relating to the efforts of the North to block the emergence of a new competitivity in the South and in the South, and ensure for its TNCs (who much of the social at the soc petual rentier incomes for obsolescent technologies.

The issue was named patent and other rights / ri The issue was never about mere protection of the particular needs of the particular needs of developing countries (as

Commercial country but something more basic. It is not about out), but of 'managed trade' or public sector vs 'free trade' vs 'managed trade' or public sector vs private sector. It is really about independence and private some Trips, Trims and services are really colonialism. Trips, strategy of the US part of a whole strategy of the US and European powers to reassert the 19th century hegemonic norms about the property rights of their nationals in other countries, the superiority of the rights of foreigners over national laws and natives, and an attempt tofind a more credible method of enforcement of such rights (other than use of military force which is now impracticable or its post-war versions of covert operations)5.

At least now, India must change its policy and posture. Negotiating tactics and strategies as pursued hitherto would inevitably lead to even greater disaster. The Uruguay Round, as the South Commission had observed in its Mexico Statement of August 1988, is more than mere traditional trade issues, and involves rewriting the entire gamut of international economic relations. It is too serious to be left to officials in the Commerce Ministry for whom this is just one of many priorities. Nor perhaps can it be left to the External Affairs Ministry

and its other political priorities.

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It is perhaps necessary to entrust the policy formulation in India, including coordination with substantive Ministries, to a permanent official who has no other responsibilities but the Uruguay Round, an official who has a better grasp of the political economy of India and of the Third World (to grasp opportunities for better mobilising the South). Only this and some high visibility given to it, and chang-

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Commerce Ministry press note has tried to make ing senior negotiating personnel could undo the in terms of the confidence of others in the Third World. This coordination should also be supported

at the political level by the Government.

Substantively, in the negotiations as part of norms and principles, India and other Third World countries should raise the entire issue of changes in the Paris conventions, the technology code and other issues. This has to be done through a proper mobilisation of support in other key Third World capitals. This will be less easy in some ways, since India would have to re-establish confidence in others of its position. Perhaps this can be achieved by decisions about negotiators and officials in Delhi suggested above. Anyhow, this has to be attempted. Otherwise, the Indian surrender will be complete. To talk about fighting for special and differential treatment, as the press note does, in this context is meaningless.

FOOTNOTES

- 1. This is why the Group of Negotiations on Goods (GNG), which exercises overall supervision over all the negotiating groups in goods, and under which the Trips negotiating group functions, is chaired by the GATT Director-General in his official capacity as DG and not in his personal capacity as when he chairs official-level meetings of the TNC.
- 2. See Surendra J. Patel, "Indian Patent Act: Implications Controversy", in Mainstream (Vol XXVII February 18, 1989).
- 3. The consultations at Montreal on Trips was chaired by the Turkish Minister, Yusuf B. Ozal, and the compromise text he presented became generally known as Ozal text.
- 4. C. Raghavan, "Uruguay Round after Montreal", Mainstream (February 18, 1989, p. 25).
- 5. See Charles Lipson, Standing Guard, University of California Press (1983).

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Tagore and Gorbachev

PRADYOT GUHA

May ninth marks the 128th birth anniversary of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore. This article is being published to mark the occasion.

—Editor.

THE heading might sound curious but, believe me, it is not meant to outwit readers.

Tagore visited the Soviet Union in 1930 and Gorbachev was born in 1931, that is, nine years after Tagore's visit. When Tagore died, Gorbachev was 11 years old. All this does not establish any relationship between Tagore and Gorbachev. I do not know whether Gorbachev read Tagore. Nor do I know whether he has been influenced in any way by Tagore's thoughts. Still, I feel there are some similarities in their perceptions although Tagore was a liberal and Gorbachev a Marxist. Let me explain.

Tagore wrote a series of letters from Moscow and on his way from Moscow to other parts of Europe and the USA to his son Rathindranath Tagore, daughterin-law Pratima Devi, Nirmal Kumari Mahalanobis, P.C. Mahalanobis, Asha Adhikari, Surendra nath Kar, Ramananda Chatto-padhyay, Nandalal Bose, Kalimohan Ghosh and Sudhindra Nath Dutta recording his impressions of the visit. These letters written in Bengali were later published under the title Rashiyar Chithi. An English translation by Dr Sasadhar Sinha was later published by Visva Bharati.

After the publication of Letters from Russia, even the Leftists disabused their minds of any reservations they might have had about the poet who was born into a rich family. Barring a passing Ranadive phase (1948-50), Tagore faced no criticism from Communist quarters. Even that criticism which did not call for an outright rejection of the Tagore legacy, produced a near-revolt in the party. The articles were withdrawn after Ranadive was removed from the leadership.

Communists maintained an indulgent attitude towards Tagore all through and even ignored his mild dig at the Soviet Union when it annexed Finland on the eve of the Second World War. For the same crime, however, Nirad C. Choudhury received a dressing down from Professor Hiren Mukerjee in the pages of Forward Bloc, the now-defunct English weekly edited by Subhas Chandra Bose.

Similarly, in Letters from Russia there were some critical remarks about the Soviet Union which the Communists chose to ignore.

Tagore said in one of his Letters:

"I do not say all is perfect here: there are grave defects. For this reason they will have trouble some day. Briefly, the defect is that they have turned their system of education into a mould, but humanity cast in a mould cannot endure. If the theory of education does not correspond with the law of living mind, either the mould will burst into pieces or man's mind will be paralysed to death or man will be turned into a mechanical doll." And then again:

"Nevertheless, I do not believe that they have been able
to draw the proper line of
demarcation between the individual and society. In that
respect, they are not unlike the
Fascists. For this reason they
are loath to admit any limit
to the suppression of the individual in the name of collectivity. They forget that by
enfeebling the individual, the
collective being cannot be
strengthened. If the individual

the dictatorship of the strong man. The rule of the many by one may perchance produce good results for a time but not forever. It is impossible to have a succession of competent leaders."

If one re-reads Letters from Russia keeping in mind the present-day revelations about the abuse of power in that country one will be amazed by the profoundness of Tagore's observations. The Communists would have done well to take cognizance of the warnings sounded by the poet rather than indulgently ignore them.

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When Tagore visited Russia. Stalin was firmly in the saddle, Trotsky had been banished and the blueprint for the extermination of Bukharin and other members of the Bolshevik old guard who could become a threat to Stalin were in an advanced stage of preparation. That was the seeding time of the poisonous tree which was later identified as "per sonality cult". On the one hand, construction work was progressing at a feverish pace, while on the other, a ruthless purge was being carried out. Tagore was all praise for the tremendous enthusiasm with which Russia was rebuilding herself.

He exclaimed:

"I am now in Russia. Had I not come, my life's pilgrimage would have remained incomplete."

Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of humanity. He realised even at that time the consequences of shackling the human mind.

I do not know whether Gorbachev has read Tagore's Letters from Russia or has been influenced by it. But I am sure the reality which prompted the poet to sound a good-intentioned warning was also the starting point of the Gorbachev reforms. Tagore had found a real humanistic ideal being implemented in the Soviet Union in spite of some distortions. The Gorbachev reforms are aimed at removing those distortions and restoring the humanistic ideals. Had Tagore been alive today, he would have blessed Gorbachev.

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Gandhi, Gorbachev and India Today-II

S.G. SARDESAI

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This is the second part of a pamphlet written by veteran CPI leader and Marxist ideologue S.G. Sardesai being serialised in Mainstream. The first part appeared in Mainstream (April 29, 1989). -Editor

X. Social Ethics

Gandhiji insisted on the purity of means for achieving social and political aims. He called it self-purification, purification of the soul, change of heart, and so on. Such mystification can be, and has been, used in history for moral surmonisation which only covers social injustice and even callousness. All Hindu scriptures defend the oppressive, inequitous caste system in the name of

spiritualism.

But it is necessary to see how Gandhiji applied these concepts to practice, the practical problems of social and political life. He insisted that selfpurification and fearlessness can only come through dedicated service of the people, through suffering and sacrifice for social aims and ideals. Once he said: "It is my ambition to wipe the tear in every eye." His most favourite song was: "He is a Vaishnava jana who knows the sorrow of others." That is what, in scientific terms, we call social ethics. He further insisted that such values have to be cultivated and nurtured consciously and perseveringly. They dot not develop automatically, or just through good intentions.

We, too, have discovered that socialist values do not develop spontaneously from the economic foundations of a socialist society. Unless they are deliberately and assiduously nurtured and defended, all manner of anti-social vices penetrate and do grievous damage to a society which is based on Socialism. This is one of the important themes on which Gorbachev lays constant stress. He asserts that perestroika is impossible without truthfulness,

honesty and integrity.

However, our immediate concern is the condition also indicion All sections of the people, and also individuals, have legitimate interests and rights. Simultaneously, they also have social obligations, social responsibility. In fact a sense of social responsibility.

Ponsibility is the corner-stone of social ethics.

What is the corner-stone of social ethics. What is the corner-stone of social children and day? Chief situation in this regard in the country and today? Criminal violence apart, corruption and utter desertion of the sense of social responsibility have investigated by the sense of social responsibility and the sense of social responsibility and the sense of social responsibility. have invaded our entire social life, all our professions and occupations. Politicians and businessmen are the worst offenders. But which profession is free from the worst offenders. is free from this evil which is eating into the vitals of our society destroying all other social tespected professions have been those of teachers tespected professions have been those of teachers and doctors. Even they have been corrupted and

numbers have lost their sense of social responsibility.

No matter what a person's occupation may be, it is his duty to do his work diligently and honestly. This is not only a question of personal morality. Every occupation carries with it its specific social obligation, what we call its work ethic.

Industrialists and businessmen can have reasonable profit. But they have to manage their industries honestly and efficiently and cannot indulge in black-marketing, tax evasion, or trample on the legitimate rights of workers. Politicians in office wield immense power. They can have their due emoluments. But they have to serve the people and cannot use their authority for swallowing public funds, nepotism, suppressing the democratic rights of the people and employ mafia gangs for physically eliminating their opponents.

Doctors have their legitimate claims. But they have to be competent in their profession, treat their patients with the utmost concern, and not prescribe wrong or unnecessary medicines. They cannot receive commissions from one or another pharmaceutical

Teachers in schools and colleges have far better salaries now than twentyfive years ago. They have their rights. But they must study their subjects thoroughly, learn the art of teaching and teach their students properly. They cannot be slipshod in their teaching or resort to corrupt practices in examining and passing students.

Students have their rights. But they must study their subjects seriously and not indulge in copying, corrupt practices or gangster methods and violence in student activities, elections of student unions,

Our working class movement is now quite advanced and powerful (except the unorganised workers). Workers boldly fight for their rights and that is correct. But an alarming degree of corruption, irresponsibility, and callousness towards the people have lowered the moral stature of their movement. Slipshod work, evasion of work, pilferage is common among industrial workers. Bus drivers get drunk endangering the lives of their passengers. Conductors insult passengers and treat them with contempt. Railway workers are callous towards passengers. Bank employees show no concern for their customers causing them endless irritation and waste of time.

In the case of the working class, this is not only an abjuration of its social responsibility. A corrupted

MAINSTREAM May 6, 1989

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Working class cannot, in reality, fight exploitation which charmy has become indispensable.

and oppression. It cannot play its role of leading the broad popular struggle for freedom and social justice.

More such illustrations are not necessary.

Gandhiji always stressed the unity of rights and social responsibility. Even about industrialists he stated on various occasions that their profits come from the exploitation of workers and he wanted them to manage industry as the trustees of the people. Of course, this is not socialism but it did mean that he was keen on the capitalists discharging their social responsibility. In my opinion, if he had lived he would have made capitalists realise that he meant what he said and that they could not ignore him without inviting his own forms of exposure and

Cynics can say that all this is moralising and has

no place in the realities of existing society.

The point is that such abuses on the part of various sections of society could be ignored if they were peripheral and did not threaten our entire social, economic and political fabric.

No one can deny that that is the threat today. Our industry, trade, politics, administration, public services, medical service, the educational system, and even the judiciary are being vitiated to the point of And that means social anarchy and chaos.

To repeat, the sense of social responsibility is no longer a utopian virtue. It has become an indispensable necessity for our functioning as an orderly and

civilised society.

All democrotic parties and organisations, in particular the Lest parties and their mass lorganisations. have to campaign against corruption and for the observance of social responsibility by every section of the people, by the followers of every profession and occupation. The issue has to be raised to a serious political level and not treated as a ritualistic job of pulpit preachers. The campaign has to become an integral part of our struggle for democracy and social

I should be excused if I refer frankly to one point. Many of our trade unions now have vast funds. Through them corruption and abuse of money are entering our ranks. Far more serious is the problem created by being in power at the State level for a long period. We are in power in Bengal for twelve years. Being in power in a bourgeois framework for a long period exposes our cadre to all sorts of temptations and pressures. Communists are human. These pressures make the problem of corruption, abuse of power, etc. serious even within the Party. illuminates the imperative need of the struggle for social responsibility more than anything else. If salt loses its saltishness, wherewith will it be salted?

Comrade Liu Shao Chi raised this question and dealt with it in How to be a Good Communist. But

subsequently that effort was given up.

Results of the Present XI. Negative Approach

Having dealt with the necessity of a peaceful advance and social responsibility (a work ethic) for the country's progress, I want to refer to a question on

What is the key weapon of remoulding India, of building the new India we aspire to build? And he "we" I mean democrats and patriots in general but primarily the Communists.

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Is it the creation of a new consciousness, a new unity and various mass movements of the people or is it parliamentary activity and parliamentary power?

No matter how we, Communists, may justify our present policies, it is a fact that our emphasis has shifted from the former weapon to the latter. And

that means parliamentarism.

This was not so, not only in the pre-independence period, but during the period of the first four general elections in the country, that is, till 1967. It is during the last two decades that the emphasis has shifted gradually and imperceptibly. And the shift has been so great that it has done grave damage to the development of the communist movement (both the Parties), the development of the Left and democratic forces, and the country's advance in general.

I can substantiate my position very concretely. For two decades after independence, we spoke of the positive and negative aspects of bourgeois rule, the growing crisis of the capitalist path of development, and the need to replace bourgeois rule by a genuinely people's government. Both in concept and practice the broad popular unity we strove to build cut across the bourgeois parties in the country, and did not mean an alliance with some of them against another bourgeois party. As a rule, we contested legislative elections on our own taking an independent position vis-a-vis all bourgeois parties. The independent role of the Party was correctly interpreted as a role independent of the bourgeoisie as a class, not just of this or that bourgeois party.

Gradually, the Left and democratic alliance has come to mean an alliance with the bourgeois Opposition parties (which we characterise as democratic or secular) with a paper thin, formal demarcation from the BJP, against the ruling Congress-I. This political alliance is backed by occasional mass strug-

gles on economic demands.

The results of this policy have become too glaring to be ignored any longer.

What are the grounds on which this alliance is

defended?

One, fighting the authoritarianism of the Congress I and that too reduced to the authoritarianism of a

single person, the Prime Minister.

India has had five Prime Ministers till now Unquestionably, Morarji Desai has been the most authoritarian of all. If we are to consider the State level, the authoritarianism of NTR, M.G. Ramachandran, Devi Lal, and the Assam Gana Parishad beats that of all other Chief Ministers. In addition Devi Lal and NTR have turned their States into family fiefs.

Two, corruption. Who on earth, believes that NTR, Devi Lal or Karunanidhi can be shining heroes of the struggle against corruption? Even the reputation of Hegde, the best of them, has been tainted No read to tainted. No need to refer to the other stalwarts of the bourgeois Opposition.

Three, anti-people, anti-democratic policies.

this respect, the congress-I Ministries been even a shade better than that of the Congress-I Ministries?

Four, economic policies. Have the bourgeois Opposition parties in power been less pro-rich and Opposition of the opposition o

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Five, secularism. Are the Hindu obscurantist NTR and the Jat casteist Devi Lal secular? And now both Devi Lal and Chandra Shekhar have come out publicly that the Janata Dal will have electoral adjustments (a euphemism for an opportunist alliance) with the BJP and that it should be admitted into the National Front. And Vishwanath Pratap Singh is practically a rubber stamp of Devi Lal.

Six, foreign policy. On this issue, it is our own position that the Congress-I policies are positive and the "genuine non-alignment" of the bourgeois Opposition is a cover for a pro-imperialist policy.

Can the grave consequences of such a political policy be overcome by occasionally organising mass struggles on economic demands? Elementary Marxism is sufficient to get the answer.

And then, we imagine that if we can get these parties committed to a progressive programme, things will be allright. They are constantly reminded of the programme adopted by the Calcutta meeting of the conclave parties in 1982-83. Deeds speak louder than words. The deeds of these parties when in office speak louder than the programme on which they put their thumb impressions at Calcutta.

We also appeal to the leaders of the National Front to spell out concretely their policies on such burning questions as Punjab, the Babri Masjid-Rama Janmabhoomi issue and so on. But do Chandra Shekhar, Devi Lal, Arif Mohammad Khan and Shahabuddin have anything in common on these issues? Can Devi Lal and Karunanidhi have a common solution of the Hindi-Tamil question? And that applies to almost all national questions.

I want to go further. We speak of a breakthrough in the Hindi speaking region, the heartland of India. In fact, this is the single most important reason for our efforts to have an electoral adjustment with the Janata Dal.

But, in the Hindi speaking region the leaders of the Janata Dal are notorious as leaders of Jats, Gujars, Ahirs, Rajputs, Thakurs, etc., that is, the landholding and socially powerful castes of the region. They are halted by the chamars (Harijans) and low caste touchable Hindus who constitute the

Vast mass of the rural toilers and oppressed castes. Does a political alliance with such leaders enable Communists to make a breakthrough in the region or does it less to make a breakthrough the middle or does it lead to our alienation from the middle

and poor peasantry and the rural landless? In fact, this policy, in my opinion, is the key eason when policy, in my opinion, is the key reason why, far from growing, the mass influence Mazdur Unional Cour Kisan Sabhas and Khet Mazdur Unions) has declined in the Hindi speaking region during the last many years.

Such is our policy of a "breakthrough". The road to hell is pound with good intentions. There

road to hell is paved with good intentions. There

this respect, has the record of the record o when the lures of parliamentarism get the upper hand over the basic class approach of Marxism.

> Let me move still further. This policy is also substantially responsible for the ghost of Kanshi Ram which is now enveloping the Hindi region. When we alienate ourselves from the rural toilers by joining hands with the Ajgar, when we fail to rally them on a class basis, Kanshi Ram thunders in the name of all the oppressed and exploited castes and rallies them against the upper castes. Class struggle is diverted and perverted into inverted casteism.

> The total upshot of this policy is that the rural well-to-do and affluent sections have gone with Ajgar and Tikait and the middle and poor sections are going over to Kanshi Ram. The Left and democratic front is a unity of the people, the masses. Different sections of these masses support different political parties. Good sections are beyond the influence of any political party. Not only in legislative elections, but generally in mass movements and protest actions, the Left and democratic front becomes a front of the Lefts and bourgeois Opposition parties against the Congress-I. How does that unite the mass following of the Lefts and bourgeois Opposition with the mass following of the Congress-I? On the contrary, that divides them. And that means that the aim of building the unity of the people following the ruling and the Opposition parties is sacrificed to building an electoral, parliamentary Opposition to the ruling party.

> We have to fight elections on our own together with individuals and groups- with a tested democratic record, and take positions in respect of bourgeois parties (ruling and non-ruling) in accordance with their position on the merits of each issue. That has to be our line.

> And this is not a line of grand isolation. It is the only correct policy for building a real people's front. What we are doing is to defend parliamentarism in the name of avoiding isolation. That is not only opportunist. The last two decades have proved that it is counter productive.

We stress in our writings and statements that the question is not only of replacing the Congress-I Government by some other government. question is of replacing the Congress-I Government with a consistently progressive and democratic Government. At the same time, we imagine that a government of these Opposition parties will, in any case, be better than the Rajiv Government. That is a day dream. Better or worse is a far off question. Can leaders whose only occupation is squabbling among themselves in pursuit of their personal ambitions come to power? And if, by some concatanation of circumstances, they do, is there any chance of their forming a stable government? It can only be a weak, unstable government divided against itself. And that means instability for the country which can only help imperialism and its (To be continued) allies.

MAINSTREAM May 6, 1989

Indian Nationalism and World Socialism

ALOK BHOWMICK

E.M.S. Namboodiripad's paper on the subject of 'Indian Nationalism and World Socialism' presented at a meeting of the Krishna Menon Society in New Delhi on March 27 was carried in Mainstream (April 8, 1989) to stimulate a discussion on the issues raised by the CPI-M leader. - Editor Here is the first contribution to the debate.

E. M.S. Namboodiripad is widely, and rightly in my humble opinion, acknowledged as the doyen of the Indian Communist movement; and deserves our utmost respect and gratitude. I have gone through most of his writings to find an answer for two nagging questions regarding world socialism but, without success. May I take this opportunity to place those questions and request for the kind favour

of a response.

Today, there is almost unanimity among the mainstream Indian Communists (the CPI and the CPI-M) over the desirability of glasnost and perestroika. Of course, some new facts have come to light; but, was it only lack of information which was responsible for the silence of Indian Communists, prior to the advent of Gorbachev on the world-scene? Or, presently is it the Soviet policy of peace or, a policy of simple self-centredness (which largely coincides with peace) to befriend the fascist Iranian regime, as that would help the Soviets in many ways, not in the least by helping them extricate from the tight spot in Afghanistan? Else, why not even a murmur is raised by the Soviets over the butchering of thousands of people in Iran, including a large number of the finest sons-of-the-soil - Communists and other revolutionaries? Or, how is it that, before Gorbachev became the General Secretary of the CPSU, he never gave any inkling of his views of glasnost and perestroika?

My second question relates to the other socialist giant, that is, China. The question does not relate, singly, to either the "cultural revolution", or the "Indo-China war", or the "past foreign policy", or the "present economic policy", but to all of them collectively. Besides the external influencing factors. what is the root cause that results in the above

manifestations?

Lest I be misunderstood, I would like to make it clear that mine is neither a polemic with any communist formation, nor the verbosity of an armchair bourgeois intellectual; but, an honest expression of the self-experience of an ordinary person who wandered for a decade before ultimately joining a communist organisation with the understanding that not necessarily the communist organisation, I am associating myself with, is the ideal one or the best of the lot, nor also that my perceptions coincide with the views of the organisation; but, inspite of all that, I can, perhaps, be more useful for the society if I associate with it than otherwise.

It is neither the place nor the occasion to go into

the details of the structure, the mechanism and the functioning or the policies, priorities and tactics of the Communist Parties and mass organisations associated with them. However, it may be said, in passing, that mechanisms could be evolved, which could result in making them more democratic, broadening their base, and attracting more pro-left/pre-people individuals to the organisational fold, without sacrificing Marxist ideology, discipline, cohesiveness and efficient functioning of the organisations. It will be simplistic, and only partially true, to hold pettybourgeois origin of the thinking individuals responsible for keeping them away from organised activity. With the glaring contradictions pervading the whole of our society, a large dose of collective intellectual input by the Communists is earnestly needed. Different perceptions within the Marxist framework may exist, as no two persons' life experiences exactly coincide. And, moreover, thought-process by its nature is indeterministic.

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In my opinion, it is the uncritical self-submission by the Communists to the Party heirarchy, which is responsible for the negative developments in any socialist society or Communist Party. There is a fine and vital distinction between selflessness and selfsubmission. Whereas selflessness makes one inherently progressive, the self-submission implying uncritical acceptance of the party's high command has a serious and dangerous potential of distorting the reality and, as history is witness, can lead to disasters of mind-boggling magnitude.

If in a generation's time Stalin and Mao have been removed from the place of idol-worship, and are being painted today, more black than white; it would not take much more than that before the euphoris over "Gorbachev phenomenon" and the "Chinese experiments with socialism" give way to critical appropriate the critic reciation of the same. It would be better if we devote some attention to the plausible pitfalls of todays popular applications of Marxism; than getting carried

away by them.

The fault does not lie with the revolutionary theory of Marxism, but our unintelligent understanding and practice. ing and practice of the same. It is but natural that many of the opportunists would be attracted towards the Communist parties, once they have some power be it in the form be it in the form of trade union, or a State Government or a country ment, or a country's reins. Even otherwise, some of the sheeps turn black over a period of time. It is for the sincere Communists to devise checks 35 (continued on page 33)

WOMEN'S WORLD

A Nouveau Riche Vulgarity

ANJALI DESHPANDE

"My husband is horrible. He drinks from morning to night. On our wedding night itself he harassed me. He said very dirty things to me,"

Shalini Malhotra said amidst tears.

Swathed from neck to toe in bandages, this 21 year old bride lay writhing in agony, in the Burns Ward of the Ram Manobar Lohia Hospital. The lower part of her face was reddish brown with burns and her swollen lips full of blisters. She is the latest victim of dowry in the Capital. She was drenched in whisky and set ablaze, and this replacement of kerosene by whisky has come to symbolise the nouveau riche culture that spelt the young girl's doom.

Shalini was married into a rich family of builders, but a family sans culture. The in-laws showed no respect either for her or her privacy. "They were horrible. They used to come into my bedroom at any hour, without knocking. Even at night when we would be sleeping. They had a duplicate key to the room. It was so humiliating," Shalini told this

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Barely out of her teens and school, this girl was married off on December 4, 1987 by her businessman father, Om Chabra. She is educated only up to standard twelve. The journey from Delhi's industrial area, Kirti Nagar, to Defence Colony, a posh residential area of the city, was a journey to a higher social scale for Shalini and her parents.

It was one of those quick marriages arranged by a pundit, and concluded within a month. "We know Praveen drank, but we didn't know he was a drunkard," says Asha Chabra, Shalini's mother. Shalini was the second of four daughters. "They did not demand any dowry at the time of marriage," informs

Asha Chabra.

On her European honeymoon, Shalini was kept locked up in a hotel room for two days in Geneva. In London she was beaten up in her uncle's house. We asked her to leave him and come and stay with us. But she would not listen to us," says the tearful mother. "I have two younger sisters. I was scared of badnami," says Shalini.

Her in-laws, including her only sister-in-law Neena Anand, harassed her continuously. "Neena used to say the first says Shahmi. used to say my father gave me three cars. What has your father my father gave me three cars. your father given you? And my in-laws used to say we spent Re 10 given you? And my in-laws used to say we spent Rs 10 lakhs on our daughter's wedding. What is your maken the our daughter's wedding into the is your aukat (standing)?" Neena is married into the

Well known jeweller's family, the Pindi Jewellers.

And since Of the Pindi Jeweller's family, the Pindi Jeweller's family of And since Shalini's parents were finacially on a lower footing, Shalini was expected to be a servant in the family. Shalini was expected to be a servant in the family. Neena used to say: who asked your parents to Neena used to say: Who asked your parents to produce four daughters? Look at my parents: they have only two children, me and my

brother. The used to make me do all the housework. No servant would stay with them because they ill treated them. When I did the cooking, they would find fault with it. When I did not cook they wouldn't give me to eat," said Shalini.

Her husband did not get along with his father. "His father took away the car he had given him (Praveen)," says Shalini. So Shalini's father bought him a Maruti, though his daughter seldom got any

rides in the car.

Praveen had left his father's construction business. The family has built the prestigious Praveen Apartments in the Sujan Singh Park area, among other constructions. Praveen hired an office near the house and became a property dealer. It was in this office that Shalini was burnt on the night of April 21, last week.

Shalini described the ghastly happenings: "That day as usual he began drinking as soon as he came home. I snatched the bottle and threw it away. He slapped me so hard I fell against the sofa and my

mouth began to bleed."

Then Praveen rushed out of the house to his office. Shalini ran after him and caught him at his bottle again. They had a fight. "Finally I poured the whisky on myself and said I will burn myself if he didn't stop drinking. I had no intentions of burning myself. I only wanted to scare him. But he said 'I shall show you how people burn', and lit a match and set me ablaze."

Shalini broke down as she described this. Even while she was burning, her husband stood and watched. The landlords hearing her screams came out. All her clothes were burnt. "The Sardarji, the landlord, gave me a bedsheet to wrap around me. He phoned the doctor. He called my in-laws. He forced them to bring me to the hospital. And all the time my husband was saying nothing had happened to me. He said I was putting up an act."

Praveen is now in custody charged with an attempt to murder. Earlier he was charged only with harassment and abetment to suicide based on Shalini's first statement to the police in which she had said that she set fire to herself. "I was scared. They told me they would fix my sisters. They said that they are so rich nobody can touch them.

Several women's groups in Delhi including Saheli and Joint Women's Programme and National Federation of Indian Women are now following the case. Shalini was finally persuaded to speak fearlessly by her natal family and the women's groups. The Defence Colony police has issued warrants against her in-laws and sister-in-law, who are (Continued on page 35)

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MAINSTREAM May 6, 1989

Raja Mohan: Focus

(Contd. from page 4)

This change has angered the Chinese, irritated the Americans and demoralised the Kampuchean rebel factions, who recognise that without the active support of Thailand it is difficult to continue the civil war in Kampuchea.

CLEARLY the entire structure of the Kampuchean conflict has been transformed by the initiatives of the Soviet Union, Vietnam and Kampuchea. While the prospects for peace in Indo-China have improved, a number of minor hurdles do remain. On the external side, the Vietnamese decision to withdraw by September 1989 does remove the central obstacle to a peace settlement. But China and, the rebel factions are not prepared to accept the Vietnamese proposal to have India, Canada and Poland (the erstwhile members of the International Control Commission for Indo-China) along with a representative of the UN Secretary General and the Indonesian Foreign Minister oversee the withdrawal of the Vietnamese troops and the cessation of external assistance to the Kampuchean rebel coalition. With the impending Vietnamese withdrawal, the insistence of China, the US and Prince Sihanouk that Vietnam must not be allowed to determine the terms of its own exit and that the United Nations must exclusively be involved remains a procedural argument without much political weight.

In relation to the internal aspects of the Kampuchean conflict, the position of China and Prince Sihanouk that the Hun Sen Government be dismantled and a new quadripartite government and armed forces be set up has become more difficult to sustain in the new context. The growing domestic popularity of the Hun Sen Government, its rising international stature, the global scrutiny of the Khmer Rouge's past, and the popular determination in Kampuchea to prevent the return of the Khmer Rouge have enhanced the ability of the Hun Sen Government to set the terms for national reconciliation. Further, by setting up a large people's militia to defend the countryside, it is fully prepared to face any threat of

a continued civil war.

The new situation in Indo-China has put the Kampuchean rebels and their benefactors in China and the United States in a quandary. China has already committed itself to stopping aid to the rebels in the event of Vietnamese withdrawal from Kampuchea. China would find it difficult to back out of this commitment on procedural or technical grounds. Continued backing for the Pol Pot clique would lead to the isolation of the Chinese in the South-East Asian region. China now can only attempt to seek a few more concessions from Hanoi and Phnom Penh on the procedures of the Vietnamese withdrawal and the composition of a new set-up in Kampuchea, by exerting pressure on the Soviet Union when Gorbachev visits Beijing in mid-May. The United States, which had been content to follow the Chinese lead on the Kampuchean issue over the past decade, is now confronted with some difficult choices.

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennal and e Gangottiere are growing pressures on Washington, there are growing pressures the Bush Administration from the Congress and the human rights groups not only to distance itself from the Khmer Rouge but also to actively prevent its return. Prince Sihanouk is pressing the United States to increase the military assistance to the noncommunist groups in the rebel coalition. But such a policy increases the risk of a renewed American involvement in Indo-China. Thailand and some groups of Vietnam veterans in the United States are pressing Washington to normalise relations with Vietnam,

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The final shape of the Kampuchean settlement would depend upon the evolution of the American and Chinese policies in the new context, the outcome of the Sino-Soviet summit in mid-May, and the scheduled talks between Prince Sihanouk and Hun Sen in Jakarta in early May. Irrespective of the form of the final settlement, the Vietnamese withdrawal from Kampuchea would significantly alter the dynamics of international relations in Asia by redrawing the lines of conflict and cooperation. loosening up traditional alignments and blurring old rivalries.

One consequence would be the normalisation of the relations among China, Vietnam and the Soviet Union without a return to the concept of an alliance among the communist states. The Vietnamese announcement of unilateral withdrawal comes just weeks before Gorbachev is due in Beijing. This frees Gorbachev's hand permitting him to move away from excessive focus on Kampuchea and take up a much wider range of issues with the Chinese leadership. The Sino-Soviet rapprochement has already been accompanied by the renewal of the Sino-Vietnamese dialogue in January, the first in nearly a decade. Normalisation of relations among the three states might also include the removal of the trappings of a military alliance which developed in the Soviet-Vietnamese relationship in the past decade, for example the presence of Soviet military facilities at Cam Ranh Bay in Vietnam. The removal of these facilities would dispel the image of a Moscow-Hanoi military alliance, freeing both countries to pursue a much wider range of relationships in the Asia-Pacific region.

A second consequence would be an end to the enduring schism between the three Indo-Chinese states - Vietnam, Kampuchea and Laos - and the ASEAN. The already warming relations between Williams ween Vietnam and Indonesia on one hand and those between Vietmam and Thailand on the other could eventually be formalised by the Indo-Chinese states joining the ASEAN. The residual opposition within the ASEAN to such a move could certainly be overcome, leading to a genuine cooperative

framework in South-East Asia.

The third consequence would be the creation of we lines of new lines of economic cooperation in the Asia Pacific region. The opening up of the economies of Indo-China is likely to attract investments from Thailand, South Korea, Taiwan, Japan and of western nations The Western nations. This would mark the end of a phase during which phase during which economic relations have largely followed ideological and strategic alignments (barring the Indo-Soviet economic relations have larger than the Indo-Soviet economic relations have the Indo-So the Indo-Soviet economic relationship) in Asia.

Sumit : Indo-Nepaditi Crisis/a Samaj Foundathe Capheneate accitgogiven to Nepalese goods, Nepal

(Contd. from page 5)

continuing preferences given to Indian exports, His Majesty's Government will waive additional customs duty on all Indian exports during the validity of the

However, given the past experience, India could treaty". not be faulted at viewing the Nepalese Government with suspicion, since the latter had gone back on its previous commitments and had not deemed it necessary to remove the notification on imposition of additional customs duty on Indian goods before making arrangements for signing the treaty.

Nepal's actions in relation to Indian goods were in stark contrast to the preferential treatment accorded to Nepalese commodities in India. Nepalese primary products and manufacture were exempt from both customs duty and quantitative restrictions. Moreover, Nepalese products, including industrial goods, were given a special non-reciprocal entry regime meant to promote the development of

the Nepalese economy.

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Not only that. India was annually refunding to the Nepalese Government excise duty worth Rs 6 crores on Indian exports to Nepal. Substantial quantities of essential commodities from India, normally banned or restricted for export, were supplied to Nepal at Indian levy prices. Nepal was also provided with unique preferential access to an extensive and adjacent market for Nepalese goods. In concrete terms, several goods were made available to Nepal at distinctly reduced rates on rupee payment basis.

On March 23, 1989 the transit treaty also expired. It had actually expired in March 1985 but was extended till the end of 1988 and thereafter for a period of four more years till March 1989. Under this treaty Nepal was granted 15 routes through Indian territory for its transit trade with third countries. There were two separate routes for its trade with Bangladesh (that is, the Radhikapur-Siliguri route) and Bhutan (that is, the Panitanki route). Nepal was also allowed to move goods from one part of its territory to another through Indian territory. At Calcutta port special facilities for warehousing and payment of demurrage were given which were Superior to that available for Indian importers (the subsidy on this score was given at a cost of Rs 1.5 crores per annum of the Indian tax payers).

And all this was done when India had no legal obligations towards Nepal since (a) Nepal is not a member of the General Agreement on Tariff and International C. (b) India has not ratified either the International Convention on Transit Trade of Landlocked Countries of 1965 or the International Conventional Convention on 1965 or the International Convention on the Law of the Sea. Yet it extended numerous transit facilities to Nepal on account of the special the special relationship prevailing between the two countries as embodied in the 1950 Treaty (which special relationship Nepal today does not want to highlight as its freedom of highlight as it feels that that abridges its freedom of action as well as sovereignty).

Thus while India did not in the least curb or urtail any coloring did not in the least curb or Nepal both curtail any of the facilities enjoyed by Nepal both in its bilateral in its bilateral trade with that country as well as in

not only distanced itself from India but also indulged in activities which were downright projudical to India's interests,

For long Nepal has played the China card while distancing the country from India. It began with the present King's father, the late King Mahendra, who positively responded to China's wily overtures on the eve of the perfidious Chinese attack on India in October 1962. When Mahendra visited Beijing around that time the then Chinese Vice-Premier Chen Yi had assured him that "China will stand on your side". He obviously had in mind the existing tensions between India and Nepal when he uttered those words. King Mahendra was not late in his response. He agreed to let the Chinese construct a road linking Kathmandu with the Tibetan border town of Kodari. This was thrown open for commercial traffic in 1967. India's strong objections to the construction of the road were rejected and Mahendra himself remarked disarmingly: "Communism does not travel in a taxi."

His son, King Birendra, pursues the same course. It is not one of befriending China out of conviction. and sincerity. The whole objective is to needle India. Several projects were handed over to China and not India in Nepal on the plea that the Chinese had quoted the lowest in their biding although such a pretext does not stand close scrutiny. Even when the Indian firm's bid was the lowest it was not selected. On the other hand, the Chinese were constantly favoured as in the case of trade whereas India was subjected to blatant discrimination vis-avis China.

In the eighties, Nepal openly violated its written understanding with India made in the mid-sixties and invited China to undertake economic projects in the Terai region bordering India. Indians were debarred from functioning in any place within 10 kilometres of the Sino-Nepal border but a similar restriction was not imposed on the Chinese within 10 kilometres of the Indo-Nepal border. The official explanation from Nepal was that Indians had not been singled out as no foreigner could work in any place within 10 kilometres of the Sino-Nepal border. But then what about Article VII of the 1950 Treaty, what about the special rights enjoyed by the Nepalese in India stemming from that Treaty? To that uncomfortable query the Nepalese officials chose to remain silent as discretion is the better part of valour.

Following the same path in a pronouncedly resolute manner, Nepal lately purchased 300 truckloads of arms from China ostensibly for use against 'terrorists' in the Terai region. Not only did this step provide a clear testimony of Nepal deliberately opting to cast a blind eye to India's sensitivities, the act was out and out aimed against India. This was transparent from the purchase of anti-aircraft guns from China. Why should anti-aircraft guns be used against terrorists? After all, terrorists in Nepal have no aircraft in their possession.

The Nepal King told the External Affairs Minister in the recent past in Kathmandu that Nepal had decided to raise two more divisions to add to its

MAINSTREAM May 6, 1989

current army of 3000, hence the stress were assert and (this of course could not satisfy India's query about the need for anti-aircraft guns; although some say this was a precautionary measure to preclude any development similar to India's airdrop of relief materials over Jaffna peninsula in Sri Lanka in June 1987). And as India had been slow in acceding to Nepal's request for arms it had approached China which had readily responded in a positive vein. This, in India's view, is quite devious: India has no force on the Indo-Nepal border but China has access to the Indian plains from Lhasa through the Kathmandu-Kodari highway (which was used by the 300 trucks carrying arms from China to Nepal).

While playing the China card, the Nepalese Government began engaging in harassment of Indians in Nepal. There are about 1.5 lakh Indians in that country. In April 1987 Nepal announced that every foreigner in Nepal would be forced to have a 'work permit'. Foreigners in Nepal are mainly Indians. So it was clear that the move was intended to hurt the Indians most. Initially this was confined to three districts. But in September 1988 the 'work permit' regime was extended to cover the whole country. While the Nepalese Government tried to explain it away on the ground that such a step would ensure job security for non-Nepalis, South Block felt that it was a method of preventing the Indians' access to jobs in Nepal.

India like Nepal had not gone public on such issues that were building up tensions in Indo-Nepal relations. Perhaps that was a tactful and wise step. But once the trade and transit treaties were allowed to lapse resulting in problems in Nepal and a hue and cry was raised in Kathmandu against Indian high-handedness, India had no option but to bring to light the relevant measures of the Nepalese authorities that had caused consternation in South Block.

It is in this setting that Niranjan Thapa, the Nepalese Home Minister, made a provocative statement. He said the citizenship of all those Nepalese who were allowed to become Nepali citizens in the last 12 years (that is, a total of 64.8 lakhs) must be subjected to a survey. It was a kind of threat that these persons too could be brought under the work permit regime.

(Significantly, most of these persons are residing in the Terai region, that is, they are those who had gone from India and settled down in the Terai region of Nepal in the past 150 years. Of the 18 million Nepalese populace about 40 per cent are those residing in the Terai area and again 40 per cent of the Terians have no citizenship. But even those granted citizenship are in for trouble.)

In the wake of such a statement India gave a broad hint that this move might compel New Delhi to think afresh about what it should do with regard to the 3.5 to five million Nepalese working in India.

There is not a shadow of doubt that the Nepalese Government's handling of its ties with India was extremely negative and it should have realised that no Government could have put up with its tan-

current army of 3000, hence the parms were essential trums for all time to come. So the Indian decision that of course could not satisfy India's query about that the need for anti-aircraft guns; although some say the need for anti-aircraft guns; although some say this was a precautionary measure to preclude any this was a precautionary measure to preclude any this was a precaution of relief

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In fact several noted Nepalese personalities have held the Nepalese Government responsible for the current crisis in Nepal. Three leading journalists of Nepal belong to this category. Kirtinidhi Bista, the former Prime Minister of Nepal, has also been critical of Kathmandu's steps. In a recent interview to Deshanter, the Kathmandu weekly, he said while India should respect and understand Nepal's legitimate aspirations, for a solution to the problem Nepal should also strive to lessen India's doubts and apprehensions "instead of adding to its perplexities".

Yet, what is most distressing is that the common people of Nepal are being subjected to intense hardship. Petroleum, kerosene, coal, baby food are in acute shortage in Nepal. Of course the Nepalese contention that the goods were not allowed to enter Nepal by the Government of India as it had imposed an "economic blockade" has no basis whatsoever. At the moment Nepal does not enjoy all the 15 routes through which trade was conducted earlier but today it does enjoy transit facility at the two transit points (Raxaul and Jogbani) closest to the Calcutta port which even earlier carried 80-90 per cent of the transit cargo. In fact in this sense the loss of transit facilities under the present regime is only 10-20 per cent.

Nevertheless, the shortages and scarcity in Nepal (mostly of fuel as the agreement on petroleum supplies between the Nepal Oil Corporation and the Indian Oil Corporation - on the strength of which Nepal's fuel requirements were drawn from 100 depots located near the Indo-Nepalese border - has also lapsed in this period, that is, on March 31, 1989) can barely be overlooked for they are causing tremendous difficulties for the Nepalese masses. While seeking all avenues to corner those elements in the Royal Palace in Kathmandu who were indulging in a largescale unauthorised trade or smuggling (which has played a crucial part in the responses from the Nepalese ruling circles to the Indian overtures), all means should be explored to minimise the hardship of the people of Nepal. That exercise needs to be undertaken in right earnest during the current consultations of the Indian Ambassador to Nepal in New Delhi. (May 3)

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R.C. Dutt: Eighelie Planya Samaj Foundation (Poke World Socialism (Contd. from page 30)

(Contd. from page 9)

difference, and the growth rate is hardly relevant. It may be possible, at least in the short-term, to achieve a growth rate higher than five per cent, but it will be a growth rate higher than five per cent, but it will be the market type of growth, probably of the "kit culture" type which the Finance Minister referred to in his Budget speech, which will make no contribution to the cherished objectives of self-reliance, equitable distribution, and, above all, eradication of poverty. This type of market, as distinct from planned development, will, however, increasingly face a contradiction from the growing political consciousness of the people released by the democratic processes.

The contradiction may indeed be hastened into a crisis by the internal problem posed by the growing inflationary pressure and by the external debt trap which threatens to deny foreign exchange even for the normal growth of the economy. The contradiction when it matures into a crisis will, however, find the country unprepared to meet it with a planned response. This will indeed be ironical for a country which thought of planning even before independence, and a dubious honour to the memory of Jawaharlal Nehru who fathered this thought and whose birth centenary is being celebrated this year with such official fan fare.

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K. Subrahmanyam: Asia-Pacific

(Contd. from page 14)

pressures on them. (For Israel the guaranteed borders will be those of 1967).

Fifthly, the Soviet Union may extend glasnost into the Oceans and start declaring which of its naval ate pressures on US and other nuclear weapon countries to follow suit.

Sixthly, within the SAARC region India can take the initiative to promote regional confidence building measures on items (i), (iii) and (iv).

To sum up, the prospects for peace are looking up faith, vision, dedication, imaginative initiatives and this generation is condemned to hard labour if we are survive.

balances that would be helpful in weeding out the black sheeps, and eliminating the unhealthy trends and practices.

The revolutionary theory loses its essence, if a Communist does not judge, for oneself, any proposition against the touchstone of betterment of society. Marxism is, undoubtedly, the only philosophy which helps us unravel the knots of the society, but the object, the ultimate touchstone, remains the society.

What is the real cause of split in the Indian revolutionary movement, at this juncture? Why do most of the communist formations treat the others as "revisionists" or, "Left Communists", and try to shun away any cooperation with them; whereas they show little compunction in joining hands with non-leftists? To quote Lenin: "The 'Left Communists' must be argued with because it is Marxists who are making a mistake, and an analysis of their mistake will help the working class to find the true road." Why are the intra-Left conflicts so numerous, and even bloody clashes so commonplace? Why do even some leading Communists have sectarian and myopic outlook? We talk of international solidarity, but avoid joining hands with our next-door revolutionary. Can we honestly claim to be fine Marxists before our actions prove us nice human beings? I am not pleading for humanism, the philosophy; but for an honest soulsearching by the Communists — the builders of the humane world-order of the morrow.

I understand that (to "misquote" Iqbal)
Behtar hai agl ke sath rahe pasban-e-dil
Lekin kabhi kabhi use tanha bhi chhod de

(It is better that the heart guards the brain; but, at times, that should also be left alone.) But, life is complex and challenging. The society is still very young and in a developing stage, far away from maturity. And, it is the prime responsibility of the best Communist minds to foresee and evolve, continually. Principled union of thought and action, coupled with humaneness is what our society is loudly crying for — only, if we care to listen!

Anjali: Women's World (Contd. from page 31)

absconding. Now Shalini is dead. She died a week later on April 28.

The NF1W, during a demonstration at her in-laws' residence in Defence Colony, learnt that this was the third case of bride-burning in a cluster of tentwelve houses in Defence Colony. Says Primla Loomba of NF1W: "Local residents told us that in the house bang opposite her in-laws' house, a man drenched his wife in whisky and burnt her. He went scot free. Not just that. Within four months he was remarried. Apparently, this is the third case of burning with whisky."

"I know I am not going to live," Shalini had said. According to doctors, in cases like hers (with 70 per cent burns, most of them third degree) chances of survival are 10-15 per cent. "Can you bring them to book?" she asked a Joint Woman's Programme volunteer. "They are so rich. Can you get me justice?"

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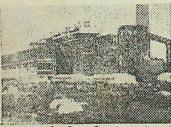
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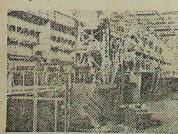
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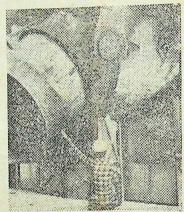
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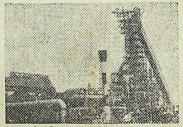
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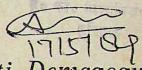
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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



Behind Panchayati Demagogy

MAY 13, 1989

THE full-blast demagogy has begun. To the poll battle with the promise of the panchayati raj - this is Rajiv Gandhi's election strategy. In making the panchayati raj as the key issue for the coming poll campaign of the Congress-I, the idea is to let the villagers feel that Rajiv has made a gift of the panchayati raj for them. And the rural voters constitute the overwhelming segment of our electorate.

This explains the break-neck hurry with which the panchayati raj zonal conventions were held and along with them the special conferences on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and women all geared to the panchayati raj. And all climaxed by a special AICC-I session on May 10. Not the threat of communal violence today but the panchayati raj tomorrow — this is the priority slogan for the present ruling establishment in India. The propaganda concentrate for the Congress-I today is strenuous image-building of Rajiv Gandhi as the founding father of grassroots democracy.

This also explains why after the ceremonial ritual of consulting the Chief Ministers through a hurriedly convened one-day meeting one-day only for a major constitutional issue - the Rajiv Government is immediately placing before Parliament a Bill to usher in the panchayati raj, so that the summer months could be spent on highpowered popularisation campaign to plug it hard that the Congress-I is the one party that is bringing democracy for the common people. And then the Bill would be passed at the monsoon session of Parliament to be enacted in time for the Lok Sabha elections in winter.

What is worth noting in this entire exercise is the calculated move to avoid meaningful consultations and interaction with other political parties. Apart from what is demanded as the minimum ritual, inter-face with other parties on this issue has been conspicuously avoided throughout. Any endeavour at making a success of the panchayati system demands the pooling of wisdom, experience and efforts of all parties. At the best of times, this was not the job which the Congress alone could have achieved. Because, as the election figures reveal, the Congress has never secured anything more than half the votes polled, and the average poll turn-out since the first general elections in 1952 has been less than two-thirds of the total electorate in the country. In other words, the ruling party under our present electoral system has always managed to get a majority of seats in the Lok Sabha, sometimes in overwhelming numbers. with a pronounced minority of votes. Under such conditions, any wise national leadership would make all-out effort at mustering the active support of all political parties if it really means business in introducing a serious measure of far-reaching import as the setting up of an active democratic order at the grassroots level.

This is borne out by Rajiv Gandhi's own admission. In his Gandhinagar (Ahmedabad) address on May 2, he himself referred to the successful operation of the existing panchayati system in CC-0. n Public Domain. Gurukul Kangri Collection, Haridwar

Congress-I Government, and the given by large same Poundation dienmust subvert or by pass it by all possible Congress-I parties (Andhra, Karnataka and West Bengal). Any sensible person, unless totally warped in dishonest politickings, would conclude from this that for evolving a viable and effective democratic system of panchayats, it is incumbent upon the Centre to have extensive preparatory consultations with the non-Congress-I parties with wide experience of the existing system and explore the possibility of joint sponsorship of any new, purposeful legislation

for bringing democracy to the grassroots. Side by side, this disclosure by Rajiv Gandhi on May 2 brings out the fact that the record of the panchayati function has been poor, at many places dismal, in the States run by the party of which he is the President, namely the Congress-I. If Rajiv Gandhi is serious about building a democratic panchayati raj, should he not have enforced in the last four years the orderly functioning of the panchayats including their regular elections in the Congress-I run States? The series of Congress-I party meetings supposed to be devoted to the panchayat system were, by and large, tub-thumping platforms to project a larger-than-life image of Rajiv Gandhi himself with very little of insight about the working or mismanagement of the panchayats under the Congress-I control. Even the zonal panchayat conferences turned out to be largely one party shows with very little input from the experience of other

The over-riding impression, therefore, that one gets from Rajiv Gandhi's present phase of overzealousness for the panchayati raj, is that this is meant to be made into the main plank of his election campaign. That is why the suggestion made by more than one participant at the Chief Ministers' conference to take more time to work out the necessary legislation, and that this could be done more effectively by the new government after the Lok Sabha elections, could not find favour with Rajiv Gandhi who is dead set to make the panchayati raj the star item of his election campaign.

On the face of it, this is no doubt an attractive proposition for boosting the sagging morale of the Congress-I. What Rajiv and his circle do not seem to realise is that the major Opposition parties have more experience of the panchayat functioning than the Congress-I, and to that measure, their image before the rural public on this score can hardly be demolished by any Congress-I electioneering blitz. After all the best laid schemes of mice and men are often upset by the enigmatic electorate.

IT would, however, be short-sighted to look at the hi-fi campaign for the panchayati raj as only a desperate election gimmick of the Congress-I party, faced as it is by the prospect of losing its majority in the Lok Sabha. More sinister is the long-term implication of this move. From the very outset there is a calculated attempt on the part of Rajiv Gandhi to bypass the State Governments. One cannot help getting the impression that he looks upon the State Governments as the citadel of the Opposition, and

In his address before the meeting with the Chief Ministers on May 5, the Prime Minister frankly conceded that his idea of meeting district officers in zonal workshops last year, was to prepare the ground for the initiative of the panchayati reforms. Similarly, the latest headline catching move of a Jawahar Rozgar Yojana has also that significant ingredient of

the Centre approaching the local level largely by-

passing the State administration as far as possible The contours of the proposed amendment to the Constitution for ushering in the panchayati raj make it abundantly clear that what Rajiv Gandhi wants is to bypass the State Governments and to let the Centre have direct access to the panchayats. Under the proposed set-up the Governor holds the pursestrings of the panchayat, not the elected State Government. Over and over again, the objection of the State Governments run by non-Congress parties to the tendency to bypass them have been brushed aside or vague assurances given which are far from

convincing.

If the new panchayati raj structure being hustled through by Rajiv Gandhi - on the strength of the massive Congress-I majority secured four years ago through a totally different mandate—is permitted to be inscribed on the Statute Book, it will be a giant step towards a highly centralised order which will ultimately lead to a small coterie at the top governing this vast subcontinent. The parliamentary democracy will then be subverted in favour of the worst

form of presidential authoritarianism. Rajiv's catchy slogan of democracy at the grassroots sounds totally hollow when one looks at the manner in which he runs the Congress-I party itself. There has been no election whatsover at any level of the party. All committees even at the district level are appoined from the Centre, office-bearers are changed at the whims and caprices of The Party Leader. The tendency to concentrate all powers at the Centre that started under Indira Gandhi, has reached a hideous stage today in which the entire party organisation has been reduced to a hierarchy of sycophants. For such a leader to talk about grassroots democracy will indeed be a gigantic hoar.

In the name of extending democracy Rajiv's panchayati raj has thus the danger of perpetualing

constitutional autocracy. May 10

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The moment you are roused

To the dumb, languishing and the stupefied must we give

These hearts, wilted, withered and broken, must be galvanized with new hope;

Beckoning them we must exhort, lift up your heads this very instant and stand united.

They before whom you quake in fear, quake more than you in their guilt

They will take to their heels the moment you are roused.

- Rabindranath Tagore

Implications of Sino-Soviet Summit

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EVER since he took over the reins of power in the USSR more than four years ago Mikhail Gorbachev has taken the world by surprise by launching a series of projects both at home and abroad to give a new look and orientation to Soviet socialism on one hand and demolish the concept of a bipolar world as part of his efforts to reinforce the edifice of global peace and security on the other. Thus he embarked in the domestic sphere on his revolutionary perestroika to restructure the Soviet society, renew the humanistic ideals of socialism trampled under the jeckboots of Stalinist inhumanity and provide a fuller, freer role to the Soviet man in conditions of glasnost mandated by the rule of law that Stalin, his cohorts and several of his successors had frequently flouted with impunity. And in the international sphere he struck a radical departure from the politics of confrontation to unveil an approach of cooperation towards the US in particular, the basic objective being a drastic reduction of the threat of nuclear holocaust through the strengthening of mutual selfconfidence and trust in order to ensure global

The second major pillar of Gorbachev's foreign policy-perspective has been restoration of fraternal relations with the People's Republic of China. Since the Great Divide in the world communist movement in the sixties, no other leader of the socialist community has played such a dynamic role in repairing the damage by reviving the spirit of cordiality in Sino-Soviet ties. His forthcoming visit to China (May 15 to 18, 1989) and the summit-level discussions with the Chinese leaders—notably Deng Xiaoping, the octagenarian grand old man of China is expected to set in motion formal normalisation of relations between the two Communist giants who had undergone a traumatic experience since considerable derable blood was shed on the banks of the Ussuri river in 1969, thanks to the pursuance of the pernicious Maoist course by the Chinese leadership steering the country in those days under the guidance of the Country in those days under the guidance of the Great Helmsman. Much water has flown down the Yangtse Kiang since the publication thirty years ago of the infamous "Long Live Leninism". Leninism" editorial in People's Daily that had projected the jected the necessity of a third world war for the purpose of advancing the revolutionary cause across the ploba the globe. Today's China, which subsequently forged a standard of the subsequently forged a strategic alliance with the US against the destructive Soviet Union, has shed much of the destructive policies enunciated by Mao Zedong against the USSR and I necessary inter-USSR and India in particular in the country's international relations while bringing about a fundamental shift in its internal policy. Yet the process of improvement of Sino-Soviet relationship which had turned from bad in the times of Nikita Khrushchev to worse in the days of Leonid Brezhnev primarily on account of Mao's jaundiced world view, could

not have registered such a sharp turnaround for the better in the last three years without the farsighted and mature ideas spelt out by Gorbachev-not on a piecemeal basis but as an integral whole - one of his cardinal objectives being the development of a closer understanding with China.

Shortly after initiating perestroika inside the USSR, Gorbachev delivered a highly valuable speech at the Soviet Far Eastern city of Vladivostok in July 1986 wherein he dwelt at length on consolidating peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region with special stress on Sino-Soviet, US-Soviet and Japan-Soviet ties. Among these, the USSR's relations with China assumed maximum prominence.

As a matter of fact what he said at Vladivostok amounted to much more than just improving Sino-Soviet ties. "History has entrusted the Soviet and Chinese peoples with an extremely responsible mission. Much in international developments depends upon these two major socialist nations," he declared. What did those words signify? They meant that revival of Sino-Soviet friendship at the popular level would not only reinforce peace and security in the Asian continent and the world at large but also leave a deep and positive lasting impact on the global

Gorbachev does not engage in rhetorical exercises bereft of substance. Every one of his statements is followed by practical measures. This was evident at Vladivostok too when he spelt out specific projects of bilateral cooperation along the Sino-Soviet border like the use of the Amur river's resources for water management schemes, the construction of a railway line connecting Soviet Kazakhstan with the Sinkiang-Uighur Autonomous Region of China (the proposal for such a step had come from the Chinese side). But of exceptional significance was the Soviet leader's decree that the border on the Amur river could pass along the "main ship channel" - a declaration that constituted a total departure from the long held Soviet stand on the subject.

Gorbachev took charge of the office of the Soviet President (while retaining his post of CPSU General Secretary) in mid-1988. And in September last he made yet another major speech having a bearing on Asia-Pacific security. It was in the Siberian city of Krasnoyarsk where he proclaimed that Moscow stood for full normalisation of Sino-Soviet ties and desired to raise them "to a level equal to the responsibility of our two countries for world politics". Thereafter he disclosed that the USSR was "ready for the immediate commencement of preparations for a Soviet-Chinese summit"

The developments since Krasnoyarsk have been striking indeed. Most of the 4200 kilometres of the disputed Sino-Soviet border (which dispute is far more complex and difficult than the Sino-Indian border problem) has been already demarcated by the

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cularly in Mongolia. Responding to Chinese sensitivities Gorbachev had in Vladivostok itself less than three years ago, announced that he intended to radically reduce armed forces and conventional armaments in Asia to limits of reasonable sufficiency. This was concretised when the USSR agreed to pull out three quarters of its troops stationed in Mongolia alongside China's decision to demobilise a million of its soldiers. That pull-out is coinciding with Gorbachev's arrival in Beijing.

In fact all the three obstacles to Sino-Soviet normalisation as underscored by Beijing are about to be removed. The 115,000 Soviet soldiers in Afghanistan have returned home - a demand consistently made by China as a major impediment on the both of repairing Sino-Soviet ties. However, Beijing regarded the presence of Vietnamese troops in Kampuchea as the biggest obstacle on that score even if Moscow had repeatedly pointed out that that was an issue to be dealt with exclusively by Vietnam, Kampuchea and perhaps China. Nevertheless, when China stuck to its guns the USSR went out of its way to forge steps to remove Chinese suspicions in that respect as well but was careful enough not to hurt Vietnamese sensibilities or abridge Hanoi's sovereignty. Thus what happened after the visit of Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shervardnadze to China from February 1 to 4, 1989 was not only finalisation of the dates of Gorbachev's trip to China thereby marking a further advance from the progress recorded during the visit of Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen to Moscow last year. It also helped to pave the way for direct Sino-Vietnamese talks on the Kampuchean problem. Subsequently Hanoi's anouncement of unilateral withdrawal of all its troops from that country by September this year has played the most crucial role in giving a real impetus to the process of a peaceful negotiated settlement of the dispute. The responses from the side of Prince Sihanouk, leader of the Kampuchean resistance movement, as well as China have not been negative till date even if some loose ends still remain to be tied up.

Unlike his predecessors Gorbachev's comprehensive system of global security does not envisage piecemeal settlements or agreements. Thus he has simultaneously sought to restore detente with the US, strengthen ties with non-aligned countries like India and repair the relations with China impaired by past happenings. His emphasis is on revival of 'trust'. This he sought to convey in unambiguous terms during his first visit to this country two and a half years ago.

"The better the relations in the Asian region between all the countries and the better the relations between the USSR and China, the better the overall atmosphere in that part of the world", he told journalists in New Delhi in November 1986. "And when the atmosphere improves and cooperation broadens, understanding will grow and there will be more trust." Elaborating further, the said:

two sides. One of the three obstacles to ASing Squiet not chemial and egandotria, which I think primarily normalisation advanced by Beijing is the presence the great powers in Asia, which I think primarily are China, India and the Soviet Union, keep improve ing, a very different situation will emerge... I think that the tendency I am talking about will gain momentum, the tendency for normalisation and better relations in Asia, including relations between such countries as China, India and the Soviet Union."

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In less than three years time that tendency has really gained momentum. Removal of hostilities and confrontation between major powers has reinforced the edifice of peace and security the world over as testified by the phenomenal strides taken in resolving regional conflicts: in the Persian Gulf, in Afghanistan, in Kampuchea. (Even if Afghanistan continues to bleed in flagrant violation of the Geneva accords, the proponents of civil war in that country are suffering heavy losses and will continue to do so until they come to their senses and realise the need for a peaceful resolution of the conflict through national reconcilation). The normalisation of Sino-Soviet ties through the Deng Xiaopine-Mikhail Gorbachev summit in May will further strengthen that process giving a renewed impetus to the settlement of the Kampuchean problem keeping in view the security concerns of every neighbouring state. Such a normalisation, leaders of both the countries now realise, would be highly beneficial in terms of reduction in defence expenditures thereby assisting their economic growth. This would also be in India's interest as it would help to promote settlement of the Sino-Indian border problem as well.

It is befitting that Gorbachev's visit to China has been preceded by developments reflecting the Chinese people's urge for glasnost. Students who organised massive demonstrations for democratisation in China were singing the Internationale. Thus they did not leave anyone in doubt about the source of their inspiration. This has added a new dimension to the visit to China of the founder of glasnost in the USSR.

In effect what we are witnessing in Sino-Soviet relations today is the growing realisation of the validity of Jawaharlal Nehru's vision. During his visit to Moscow in 1955, Nehru had said: "Countries make pacts and alliances often through fear of some other country or countries. Let our coming together be because we like each other and wish to cooperate and not because we dislike others and wish to do them injury." The present developments on the Sino-Soviet front are evidedce of the abiding relevance of Nehru's ideas in today's complex world. These ideas, which form the basis of the Debi Declaration for a Nuclear Weapon Free and Nor Violent World, signed during Gorbachev's visit to India in 1986, are finding increasing support from statesmen like Gorbachev and Deng Xiaoping who are all set to initiate a new era of cooperative relationship with each other. Experts of both countries have warned have warned against hoping for a restoration of Sino-Soviet alliance relationship of the fifties, but

(Continued on page 34)

In the background of the current interest in panchayati raj, heightened by Rajiv Gandhi making it his main election platform, this article by a former Cabinet Secretary assumes importance. - Editor

Democratic Decentralisation and System of Governance

NIRMAL MUKARJI

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DECENTRALISATION below the State level involves making a choice between bureauthors making a choice between bureaucracy and democracy, in the sense that it can mean either the delegation of administrative powers to district officers or the devolution of political authority to district governments.

Further, decentralisation below the State level cannot be viewed in isolation from the larger issue of reordering relations between the Centre and the States. Democratic decentralisation, as an idea, has gained wide acceptance. What has not been adequately recognised, however, is that the effective implementation of the idea requires major changes in the

system of governance.

British India was ruled by a governor-general, under whom governors (or, lieutenant-governors) ruled the provinces, and district officers, variously called collectors, district magistrates or deputy commissioners, the districts Some provinces had an intermediate layer of divisional commissioners. And all provinces had to accommodate the limited democracy extended by the reform Acts of 1919 and 1935. But the pyramid of rulers at the Centre, the provinces and the districts remained the essense of the British system. Knit together by the common purpose of preserving the raj, these rulers ran a unitary form of government. A unitary system is often accompanied by a high degree of centralisation. But the opposite was the case here. Governors and district magistrates were allowed a great deal of latitude to "do their own thing" in many matters. It was an example of even a unitary system needing to centralise only selectively, leaving local problems to be managed through decentralised power in the provinces and districts. Within the unitary pyramid there was thus a nice balance between centralisation and decentralisation.

Independence did not bring about a revolutionary change in the system of governance. But even so, major change in the system of governance. But even so, major changes did take place in at least three respects. respects. Firstly, the territories comprising the British provinces and the princely States were reshaped into States, of which there are now twenty five. The political map of India bears hardly any resemblance to make the political map of India bears hardly any resemblance to make the political secondly, at blance to what the British left behind. Secondly, at the district the British left behind. the district level too, boundaries were drawn and redrawn so the counredrawn, so that the administrative map of the country also is the tree administrative map of the country also is try also is vastly different to what it was before. Thirdly, and most significantly, the governor-general and governors were replaced by democratically elected governors were replaced by the States. elected governments at the Centre and in the States. The Union and State governments were accorded constitutional recognition and a federal relationship between the two came into existence as against the command structure of earlier times. The districts continued to be administered as before, which meant that the received command structure had to operate for the first time between governments at the State level and "ruler model" bureaucrats in the districts.

As was to be expected, this last aspect led to friction. Neither the political leadership at the State level nor local leaders of the ruling party found it possible to accept without demur the considerable discretionary powers left with district officers under the British dispensation. The former officially took away many of these powers, ranging from such petty matters as the power to transfer primary school teachers to more weighty items like the power to withdraw prosecutions. Both state and local level politicians exerted unofficial pressure to see that such powers as remained were exercised in line with political preferences. This virtual take-over of bureaucratic powers by the political elites was, in a way, an extension of the struggle for self-government led by the same elites. A bureaucratically decentralised system thus gave way to a politically centralised one. British provinces were unitary but decentralised. The States were conceived as unitary, like the British provinces before them, but contrastingly started becoming centralised.

Simultaneously, there was a centralising process on at the national level also. Having witnessed the partition of the country, a fearful constituent assembly opted for a strong centre. In pursuance of this political and legislative provisions were enacted which gave the Union overriding powers. Financial provisions were made, and these were of crucial importance, under which the Union could and did wield enormous clout vis-a-vis the States. Supplementing these constitutional provisions, planning was adopted as the cornerstone of development, and the planning regime that came into being acted as a powerful centralising force. Over time, chiefly because central planning was backed by central financing, Union ministries entrusted with State subjects became bloated with functions and staff. The Union began doing much of the States' work, and the States in turn did the same in respect of the dis

It is now beginning to be realised that the upward shift of functions, from the districts to the States and from the States to the Union, has not in the least contributed either to strengthening the Centre or to making planning more effective. Indeed it has had

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the opposite effect on both congressed the rynaching than of government has become excessively flabby, at the Centre as well as in the States. Planning has become so out of touch with ground reality that it is in danger of losing credibility. These developments have made political parties and scholars think in terms of reversing the upward trend, which, unambiguously put, means decentralising functions from the Union to the States and from the States to the districts. Political leaders, who in the early years set out to conquer the bureaucracy, no longer fear decentralisation on the ground that this might put power back in the hands of bureaucrats, because the bureaucracy, was successfully subordinated to political control long ago. Their fears have more to do with an aversion to sharing power with any one.

It is also beginning to be realised that, at the level of the people, things are not the same as they were when the Constitution was written. Universal adult suffrage coupled with frequent and regular elections have made a previously quiescent people politically conscious. The successful overthrow of entrenched regimes in several States, and even at the Centre, has made the people aware that they count. The progress of politicisation is uneven, which is not surprising given the diversity of the country. There are still pockets where elite politics holds sway. But everywhere the leaven of democracy has started a process towards mass politics. The people are beginning to demand a say in the running of their own affairs. It is this more than the creeping decay of centralised governance that has impelled political parties to turn their attention to decentralisation. If their statements of intent are to be taken seriously, the task is not whether to resolve the paradox of a high degree of centralisation in a federal democracy but how to do

To sum up so far, in the centralisation-decentralisation continuum, the system inherited from colonial times was in many respects more decentralised than centralised. With the arrival of democratically elected governments at Centre and in the States, the balanced was heavily tilted towards centralisation. Four decades of experience yielded the lesson that centralised governance and central planning had not worked particularly well. Meanwhile mass particularly well. Meanwhile mass politicisation began to make its presence felt and generated a demand for participation. It is now necessary as well as possible to reverse the tilt away from centralisation towards more decentralised governance, including more decentralised planning.

In the descending cascade of decentralisation from the Union to the States and from the States to sub-State levels, the States would figure at both stages, as recipients of powers and functions at the first and as shedders of these at the second. If the cascade stops at the first stage, the States would be choked with powers and functions, and people's participation would remain a far cry. If, on the other hand, the cascade only starts at the second stage, the states are unlikely to part with enough powers and functions to make sub-State levels viable for fear that this may reduce their own importance too much. All

the past experiments to decentralise below the State

the opposite effect on both counting the machinery necessary of government has become excessively flabby, at the Centre as well as in the States. Planning has become so out of touch with ground reality that it is in danger of losing credibility. These developments have made political parties and scholars think in

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Since the States occupy a cardinal position in Union-States relations on the one hand and in down ward relations on the other, it may be useful to have a close look at them. The concept of partially self-governing States has its roots in pre-Independence thinking. The Constitution gives it pride of place by the very first article declaring that India shall be Union of States. It is not necessary to trace in detail how the present configuration of States has evolved. It is sufficient to recall the major phases of that evolution. There was, first, the incorporation of the princely States which occasioned the division of the country into parts A, B, C and D States. There was, next, the demand triggered by Andhra for recognition of the linguistic principle which led to a comprehensive and largely durable reorganisation of State boundaries. Thirdly, the grant of full Statehood to a relatively small territory like Nagaland initiated a course in which, on tribal or other grounds, several other small States came into being. It cannot be said that the number of States will stay at the present twenty-five.

THE tiny States are, in terms of size, more akin to districts elsewhere than to the other States. Some of them have district council's under the Sixth Schedule, which being constitutional bodies cannot be replicated in States where the Schedule does not apply. Of the 23 districts having a population of less than a lakh, 19 are in the tiny States. Tiny States and tiny districts, it would appear, go together. Both have their own distinctive problems of governance.

Decentralisation from the State downward may be thought of as an extension of the cascade descending from the Union. There would have to be intermediate levels before the ultimate level of the village. On the first point of decentralisation there are broadly three views. The Balvantray Mehta Report favoured the block as being nearest to the people. The Sukha moy Chakravarty (Economic Advisory Council) report on decentralisation of planning considered even the district to be too small for proper area planning. The Constitution contemplates a regional approach for States like Maharashtra, Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh, and Uttar Pradesh and Bihar have as already noted, adopted the idea for backward area. The Asoka Mehta Report on panchayati rah however categorically a home to be a because however categorically favoured the district, because historically it had been the pivot of local administration for tration for centuries and also because, for planning and related purposes, the requisite expertise could be mustered at this level and not lower. The Dank wala Report on block level planning and the Hand mantha Rao Report on district planning in essence endorsed this view. Thinking in political parties has also crystallised on the districts as the most appropriate level for first stage decentralisation from the State level.

in 1981 with an average population of about 1.8 million per district. The number of districts has million per district but so has the population million per then but so has the population. The increased since then but so has the population. The increased that Report, in a section on smaller districts, Asoka Mehta Report, in a section on smaller districts, Asoka that when districts are too large plan pointed out as well as supervision of development work is rendered difficult. Also popular representawork in zilla parishads, based on population, becomes 100 large. It visualised a million of population with local variations to be a "reasonable target". Going by the million per district yardstick the average in 1981 was on the high side. Averages notoriously obscure worrisome aspects. Districts below the obscure need cause no anxiety. But those above clearly should. There were 39 'monster' districts with population above 3 million each in 1981. Since then dozens more have crossed this mark or are on the verge of doing so. If India's population can be kept down to a billion plus in the year 2001, it is necessary to think now in terms of doubling the number of districts, which then at 700 odd would at that time provide a reasonable average of a million and a half per district.

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Traditional sentiment and non-plan financial implications were mentioned by the Asoka Mehta Report as the reasons for inaction in the direction of smaller districts, even when the logic was noticed. It must be said to the credit of the States that they have been seized of the need to break up large districts into smaller, more manageable ones. The monster-in-chief of 1981, 24 Parganas in West Bengal, has for instance recently been split into two districts, North and South. But each new district still has a (1989) population of over 6 million. Perhaps the States would find it easier to overcome the obstacle of traditional sentiment if the obstacle of lack of funds could be got out of the way. Since decentralisation of any kind and degree to districts of ungovernable size is a questionable proposition, the reorganisation of large districts needs to be put on the national agenda, given priority and allotted

requisite funds from national resources. Coming to decentralisation below the district, there are two parallel hierarchies in all the States, a bureaucratic one and a democratic. On the bureaucratic side, allowing for slight variations in the States, things have remained more or less frozen in the mould of sub-divisions, talukas or tehsils, revenue circles and village 'mauzas'. The number of subdivisions has increased here and there but without disturbing the overall pattern. The only bold innovation has been in Andhra Pradesh where talukas have been healbeen broken into mandals headed by mandal revenue officers The measure is intended to bring the administration closer to the people, with which end in view mandals have been constituted with an average mandals have been constituted with an average population of only around 35,000. Mandal headquarters with headquarters are meant to become focal points with banks. Second and other banks, secondary schools, police stations and other local institutions. They could in time become growth centres, especially because they also house developmental officers. On the Control of the second related fucilities.

On the democratic side, the Balvantray Mehta Report visualised two levels below zilla parishads,

Excluding the tiny States, there were bactvarsarrate soundation clarification and village panchayats. During samitis at the taluka level instead of the block. The Asoka Mehta Report felt that, below the district level, the balance between technological requirements and possibilities for meaningful participation by the people in development could best be achieved by grouping a number of villages to constitute mandal panchayats, each such panchayat to cover a population of 15,000 to 20,000. Karnataka has adopted such a model. Andhra Pradesh too has done so, except that its mandals are twice the size and are coterminus with its unique revenue mandals. West Bengal has block samitis and gram panchayats, but the 'gram' is related to population of 10,000 plus and not to a single village concept. There is thus a variety of arrangements below the district level and it may be wise to let each State continue to have the flexibility to evolve the system it considers best suited to its historical, cultural and political circumstances.

> AN extreme form of decentralisation is to break up, or break off pieces from, a larger entity. If that were to happen to a country it would amount to balkanisation or secession and either eventuality would be unacceptable. Bangladesh was a freak exception, if only because the two parts of undivided Pakistan were geographically far apart. But breaking up, or breaking pieces off from, subnational units does not attract similar unacceptability. Thus, for instance, Andhra Pradesh was able to break up its talukas into mandals without encountering constitutional or political hurdles. Assam experienced Nagaland, Meghalaya and Mizoram breaking off, not without political unrest and constitutional change, but with the nation's acceptance since discontent with Gauhati's yoke did not mean secession from the country. If Gorkhaland were ultimately to break off from West Bengal or, for that matter Jharkhand from Bihar, Uttarakhand from Uttar Pradesh, Vidarbha from Maharashtra and so on, the dominant elites of the mother States in each case may feel upset but the nation would survive such minor surgery. Surgical decentralisation is, however, not the central concern of this article.

If the new panchayat raj institutions are not to go the way of the old panchayati raj institutions (PRIs) they must possess characteristics the lack of which led to the failure of the latter. Firstly, district governments must be recognised as politicl entities, with political parties openly contesting elections. The past approach of keeping panchayats sanitised from politics, though well intentioned in one sense. overlooked the invigorating role of politics as an engine for change. It also deprived the polity of an entry stage for new recruits into politics and a nursery for grooming such entrants for higher responsibilities. Without the political dimension there can be no real democracy. And anything short of genuine democracy will perish just as surely as guided democracy did elsewhere or party-less democracy in the case of the first generation PRIs. The second generation PRIs of West Bengal, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, having remedied matters in this respect, stand out as useful precedents.

totality of district governance, with the district bureaucracy coming squarely under them. division between regulatory and developmental functions, initiated by community development and continued in PRIs, is artificial and untenable. It compels development to stay within the limits set by the present societal configuration. This is so because any attempt to change the configuration, such as through land reform, inevitably comes up against the power structure. When that happens, regulatory administration all too often sides with the power elite. If there is to be any worthwhile change this collusion must go, and that can only become possible if the two arms, regulatory and developmental, are required to work together under district governments. Ultimately what matters is who wields the lathi and if that remains with the district officer, district governments will be just as unable to deliver genuine development as PRIs.

Thirdly, the fate of district governments must not be left to the tender mercies of State governments. This means two things. One, elections must be held at regular intervals under the overall supervision of the Election Commission. As far as possible, the method of elections should be direct because the indirect route is easily manipulable. Two supercessions should be barred. In the case of the States there is the controversial and much misused Article 356 under which elected State governments can be removed and President's rule imposed in the eyent of failure of the constitutional machinery. Sooner or later this vestige of colonial rule will have to go. In respect of the district there is no justification for replicating a measure which would give State governments a handle to remove inconvenient district governments.

Fourthly, district governments must be nested in the federal idea, forming a third tier of the polity. The third tier would subsume self-governing units at sub-district levels right down to the gram sabhas. This again means two things. One, that "The Districts" must find a place in the Constitution, not perhaps in the elaborate manner of Part VI dealing with "The States" but equally not in the perfunctory manner of Part VIII dealing with "The Union Territories". Happily, the intervening slot of Part VII has been lying vacant ever since Part B States were abolished and is available for a suitable formulation for the districts to be fitted in. Two, the introduction of a third tier must not squeeze the intermediate second tier or be seen as attempting to do so. If the aim is to strengthen and enlarge India's federal democracy, it is as important to make the States, more effective as to carve out a third tier for the Consequently, a reordering of Centre-States relations must go hand in hand with extending the federal idea to a third tier. As of now the Union has overburdened itself with functions pertaining to State subjects. If the superfluous fat were to be shed, the Union might handle what remains better, and the States would have more to share out with the districts.

Fifthly, in a three-tier federal system, there would have to be a new financial regime as between the Union, the States and the districts. On the one hand,

Secondly, district governments must look after the the Union must be left with resources to meet its Secondly, district governments with the district essential only gardens in a position to raise add the districts, not being in a position to raise adequate resources on their own, must have the oxygen of assured, united devolution of funds from the Union in sufficient measure to make purposeful self-government at these levels possible. So far the percentage shares of the States in Central taxes have been determined by the Finance Commissions. Dr Raja Chelliah, the noted expert in public finance, once urged the need for finality in this matter. Specifically he suggested that 40 per cent of income tax and corporation tax and 35 per cent of Union excise should go to the States and in addition 5 per cent of income tax and corporation tax to local bodies, and that a provision to this effect should be made in the Constitution. Finance Commissions should thereafter only distribute the total of the States' share among the States. On the grants side, Dr Chelliah suggested that all block and other grants should be channelled mainly through the Finance Commissions (rather than the Planning Commission). which should be guided not by the gap-filling approach but well-accepted principles of equalisation. As regards loans, he wrote that "the basis of allocation of market borrowing among the States needs to be examined and new principles have to be evolved".

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Going beyond Dr Chelliah's refreshing approach one is inclined to suggest (as a non-expert) that, in order to introduce finality and avoid recriminatory debate, a provision may be made in the Constitution that 45 per cent of the aggregate resources of the Union (leaving aside obviously unshareable items like provident funds of Central employees) should go to the States, of which 5 per cent should be ear marked for being passed on to the districts.

Sixthly, there must also be a new planning regime. We need to find a way to federalise national planning. The Planning Commission should move out of the investment-cum-growth type of planning in which it has remained locked and move into the hitherto almost unexplored terrain of policy planning. It should think anew about issues like the reasons for persistent mass poverty and deprivation the reasons for the continued backwardness of regions, the roots of public unrest of various kinds, the oppression to which the weak are subjected, the decline of institutions like the police and judicial administration, the status of women, the proper nurturing and education of children, the full implications of population growth, the proper management of water and land resources, the restructuring of relations with neighbouring countries the tries, the impact of external policies, the proper balance between defence and development, the rising cost of the bureaucracy, and many others. It should seek to build not seek to build national consesus on the policies which the country as a whole should adopt in regard to such issues. The Commission may involve itself in sectoral planning of the rest sectoral planning for Union subjects. For the rest, planning should be decentralised to the States and districts. The States are districts. The States for sure and, to the maximum extent possible the districts and to the maximum extent possible, the districts too must strengthen (Continued on page 10)

Indian Community in Nepal: Some Special Features

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ngthen ge 10) New Delhi's complaint about "systematic discri-mination" against the Indian community in Nepal may have a basis, but there are three compelling reasons why this theme should not be allowed to gain prominence and further complicate Nepalese relations. The first is, of course, Jawaharlal Nehru's advice: old hands in the Foreign Office may still remember Nehru's warning against any overt involvement on India's part in the affairs of the Indian communities abroad. Such a course, in his view, was sure to spoil India's relations, in particular, with the Afro-Asian countries. Admittedly, this doctrine may have only a limited application in the case of Nepal since the reciprocity clause of the 1950 Treaty makes it obligatory for the Governments of India and Nepal to give equal treatment to the "nationals of one country in the territories of the other". But this does not invalidate a valued principle; if anything, it simply reinforces it!

Second, in any underdeveloped country the issue of foreign nationals tends to get politicised as local aspiration for jobs and economic opportunities grows. This makes it incumbent on the part of its government to frame citizenship laws and employment rules mainly with a view to indigenising the civil service and other sectors of the economy. In East Africa, this process witnessed in the 1960s a progressive elimination of the Indians from their intervals.

jobs, business and commerce.

Third, any generalised backing of the Indian community in Nepal may have a negative impact on Nepal's efforts for national integration - which in itself has become a controversial subject. According to Article 2 of the 1962 Constitution, any one could qualify for Nepalese citizenship if he or she has resided in Nepal for not less than a period of two years in case of a person of Nepalese origin, and for not less than a period of twelve years in case of a person other than of Nepalese origin". Since the birth registration procedures in Nepal have come into force only very recently, it is difficult to determine legally the term "person of Nepalese origin". But many Indians who have settled in Nepal for two or more generations are reported to have already statted acquiring citizenship certificate. Since application for divining citizenship certificate. cation for citizenship needs to be certified by one or two prominent persons in a locality, wealthy Indians have found in have found it easy to obtain citizenship. Some have even dual easy to obtain citizenship. even dual citizenship which is prohibited by both Indian and Nepalese laws. This is not the case with the poor Indians, who work as wage labourers in the Terai factor. Teraj factories and on land as they have neither the means nor the connections to acquire such citizen-

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With these considerations in mind, let us examine certain specific features of the Indian community in Nepal. The number of affected Indians as cited by the Ministry of External Affairs is said to be 150,000. But some hardliners in Kathmandu exaggerate this number mainly with a view to creating a scare about an Indian influx into Nepal. In 1983, a Task force which the Government of Nepal set up under the chairmanship of Harka Bahadur Gurung, put the number of Indians to be anywhere between four to five lakhs, of which 95 per cent were said to be concentrated in the 18 districts of the Terai. The findings of this Task Force generated a heated controversy in Nepal as some took them to be a clumsy attempt to drive a wedge between the hill and the Terai people.

The prudent course in such circumstances will be to rely on the figures given in Nepal's 1981 Census (Social Characteristics Vol. 1 Part II). Accordingly, the total number of Indian-born people of both the sexes in 1981 was 222,278 of which the majority was located in the bordering district of the Terai. Of this total, 157,000, that is, almost two-thirds, were females. A more interesting feature was that 98,000 of females were listed in the Census as having settled in Nepal for marital reasons. Presumably, these were housewives and, as such, some may be facing discrimination in the family of their in-laws. But need this worry our officials over-much? Would it not be prudent, instead, to leave such cases to be sorted out by some women organisations in

Kathmandu?

Of the 2,2 lakh Indians, around 37,000 were recorded as below 15 and 60 years or above. (The number may have gone up or down during the last 8/9 years.) These people cannot possibly be affected by the employment permits imposed on the nonnationals. Barring the Indian housewives, children and old people above 60, the total number of economically active Indians, therefore, cannot possibly exceed 50,000 (or even less). Of this, 20,000 of both sexes were shown in the Census as being engaged in agriculture, another 20,000 in commerce and industry, and just around 10,000 engaged in the service sector. In Kathmandu 500 Indians were engaged in commerce, 120 in agriculture, and 200 in service.

Most Indians in agriculture are either tenant or landless labourers as the land-laws of 1964 debar non-nationals from owning land. Members of these poor families get wage employment also in various bidi, rice, and match-manufacturing factories in the districts of the Eastern Terai. These Indians are exploited equally by Nepali landlords and Indian businessmen and, therefore, discrimination in their case cuts across the line of nationalities.

On the other hand, in the commercial and business sector, rich and well-to-do Indians of the upper castes predominate. They hold a complete monopoly

Some Indian Nepal's export-import trade. merchants in Kathmandu are also suspected to have Accordingly, the government imposed work merchants in Kathmandu are also suspected to have Accordingly, the government imposed work been involved in various economic rackets. The partial pationals where Nepalese skills were available not when the Nepali Government instituted a gift parcel scheme under which any Nepali could receive a giftparcel a day from abroad, the scheme was used by the Nepali exporters and their Indian business associates to send into Nepal from Hong Kong, Singapore, etc. expensive goods like radios, watches, flashlights, cameras (which subsequently found their way into the Indian market). Some business houses were also responsible for smuggling Indian jute from Bihar and West Bengal into the Terai jute centres and then to be shipped as Nepalese jute to the overseas countries.

In the rice-surplus districts of the Terai, again, businessmen have indulged in rice-smuggling because India needs the surplus while the businessmen have

gained large quantities of Indian rupees.

In the industrial sector, again, Indian dominate. A majority of Nepal's garment factories, which accounted for 40 per cent of Nepal's foreign earnings during 1986-87, are owned by the Indians. Further, the Individual Enterprises Act of 1981 has encouraged increasing Indian participation in industrial management and labour manpower. Some Indian private houses are alleged to have taken advantage of the joint collaboration schemes to invest in such industries as could yield them quick return and also meet the consumer needs of the Nepali upper classes.

Finally, as noted before, the number of Indians in the service sector is small (only 10,000), but they face increasing pressures as a larger number of Nepalese acquire requisite training and qualification to fill these jobs. Nepal's Seventh Five Year Plan estimated that around 1.2 million people would be added to the job market and, therefore, it was necessary to absorb them in meaningful employment. The Plan. therefore, stressed on the need for (a) employment generating programmes; (b) expanded training to develop local skills in various sectors; and (c) priority for employment of the Nepalese nationals. As a result of its recommendation, the Government had set up an agency to carry out regular survey of employment conditions and up-to-date records of foreign workers in the country.

government imposed work Accordingly, the nationals where Nepalese skills were available. Side by side, it intensified the drive for citizenship so that the ambiguities between the Nepalese and non-Nepalese nationals could be removed. Certain restriction a long time area tions were, however, taken a long time ago. Around 1960, citizenship was made compulsory for the owners of small-scale firms. Teaching was another activity where requirement of citizenship was made obligatory. As the Education Code of 1961 stated "first priority in teaching shall be given to Nepalese citizens, and then to emigrant Nepalese. If persons of neither category are available, or lack the essential qualifications, foreigners may be appointed on a temporary basis.

As old-time settlers, many Indian teachers should have known this law and taken Nepalese citizenship to save their jobs. It must be noted that around 126,000 Indians were shown in the Census as staying in Nepal for 12 years and above, and therefore they have the requisite qualification to get admitted to the Nepalese citizenship by due course of the law

It is not our case that discrimination against individual Indians had not taken place, but should job permits and restrictions on the employment of nonnationals appear so exceptional to us? All over, in the Indian States, pressure to accommodate the "sons of the soil" (though why not the "daughter" too) has become a patent force and, notwithstanding constitutional guarantees for equal economic and employment opportunities, no State Government has shown the courage to fully ignore such pressures,

The reciprocity clause of the 1950 Treaty should not, therefore, come in the way of employing and promoting Nepalese (including the India-born) citizens. Unless we understand this, we cannot but seal a migration pattern whereby an overwhelming majority of poor and semi-starving Nepalese cross the borders to find jobs in India as domestic servants, peons, door-keepers and so on; while the Indians go to fill the skilled and entrepreneural jobs in Nepal. Certainly, a rethinking on this particular clause of the Treaty his become unavoidable. []

Mukarji: Decentralisation

(Contd. from page 8)

their planning capabilities. Vigorous State and district planning, within the compass of nationally accepted policies and under a financial regime which permits local innovations, would be the way to harmonise the planning idea with the federal.

It seems a stage has arrived when both the Congress and important Opposition groups favour demodecentralisation backed by Constitutional sanction. But this overworked term means different things to different people. Some view it as involving only incremental improvements in panchayati raj within the existing framework of governance. Others, like this writer, think that democratic decentralisation should mean a fundamentally new system of governance through two related measures: a third tier of democratic district governments to replace bureaucratic 'district officer' rule, and a new scheme of relations between the Union, the States and the districts based on optimal decentralisation. Some favour a uniform model for the whole country with effectible elections.

(Courtesy: The Hindustry Times)

the essentials for incorporation in the Constitution leaving all other matters flexible so as to permit adaptation of the underlying idea to local circums tances in the different States. Some see in the Cont ress leadership's new-found interest a design to by pass the States and virtually to convert districts into Union Territories. If this is indeed the inter-

tion, it would be a serious mistake. Given the Congress and Opposition positions in favour of democratic decentralisation, attention needs to be focussed on giving content to what is only a concept so far. Before the Constitution amended there must be a full and open debate. would be nothing short of tragic if, like the Dels mation Rill and per to mation Bill, an amending Bill in this case were we be suddenly an amending Bill in this case were were be suddenly sprung on the nation and hastly enacted Forth enacted. For then a vitally needed reform in the country's system of governance would be obscured in a cloud of control in a cloud of controversy. If combative posture which rule out the which rule out the possibility of achieving constitution cannot be avoided in the run-up to the next election it would be wiser to defend the run-up to the next election. it would be wiser to defer the amending legislated

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NAM: Proposed Distortion of Priorities

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THE Agenda of the Ninth Non-Aligned Summit Conference, to be held at Belgrade early in September this year, will contain (like that of the UN General Assembly meeting taking place in the same month) the usual and standardised items, such as issues of maintenance and promotion of world peace, the remaining problems of colonialism, matters concerning the New International Economic Order (NIEO), of the North-South cooperation and of South-South cooperation, and so on. But, there would also be a new item - a Report by the Committee of Non-Aligned Foreign Ministers on Organisational Methods and Procedures on the Functioning of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

This Committee met at Nicosia (Cyprus) in January this year (under the chairmanship of the Foreign Minister of Cyprus) and reportedly decided to make their recommendations to the Ninth Summit. While the contents of their report are not known, the essential features of their concerns are fairly well known. The Committee is reportedly concerned with improving organisational methods and procedures of the function of the NAM, allegedly to improve its efficiency, such as changing the style and content of the documentation of NAM Conferences (which are unduly long and verbose); introduction of voting, in place of the present consensual method of decision-making; changing the format and frequency of meetings, so that the NAM can respond promptly to emergency situations when a member country of the NAM is threatened; the need for the Chairman of the Movement to have an informal advisory body to assist him and enhance the decision-making process: greater contacts between the co-ordinating Bureau and the UN Security Council caucus of the Movement; greater concern and more active involvement of the NAM in observance of human rights (which the Movement has, so far, underplayed); establishment of a Secretariat for the Movement; the question of funding the acti-Vities of the NAM; and so on. The Chairman of the Committee, the Foreign Minister of Cyprus, tenorted in the Committee, the Foreign Minister of Cyprus, reportedly sensed genuine interest (among members) in revitalising the role of the Non-Aligned Move-

There is, ostensibly, nothing wrong in the preoccupation of any organisation/movement with issues of structure, organisation/movement with then, this organisation and procedures. But, then, this should always be subordinate to the promotion movement. The present pre-occupation of the NAM with the factor is disturbwith the former, rather than the latter, is disturbing, precion, rather than the latter, is disturbing, precion of prioriing, precisely because of this distortion of priori-

This unfortunate development has started happening ever since the last, Eighth, Non-Aligned Summit Conference, held at Harare (Zimbabwe) in September 1986 and the assumption of chairmanship of the NAM by President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe. Even at the Harare Summit, Mugabe started focussing the attention of the non-aligned states on such matters as the need for a Secretariat of the NAM and the review of the consensual procedure of decision-making at the Non-Aligned Conferences. But the other leaders of the NAM ignored this. what seem to be, obiter dicta of the New Chairman. But, he continued to pursue such issues, adding the issue of funding of the Movement. This culminated in the meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the NAM last September at Nicosia appointing a Committee to consider these problems. The Committee met in January this year and deliberated on various proposals received and decided to report to the forthcoming Belgrade Summit Conference.

In effect, what has happened is the likely diversion of the attention of the non-aligned states from discussing such vital issues before the NAM as the peaceful settlement of disputes between and among the NAM, the implications of the new detente to the promotion of the policy of non-alignment, the unfreezing of the North-South dialogue of promotion of South-South economic cooperation, removal of apartheid in South Africa, and colonial liberation of Namibia and New Caledonia. Instead, heads of states and government of the 101 members of the NAM are likely to waste their time and energy on reconsidering items of organisational methods and procedures, which will not promote one iota of the policy of non-alignment. If the policy and movement of non-alignment are not in good shape today, and their credibility is low, it is because of neglect by the non-aligned states of solutions to the vital issues of the day, failure to inject new ideas and activities into the functioning of the NAM, rather than with secondary issues of establishing a Secretariat and funding of the Movement.

Thus, for instance, the NAM has hardly spent any time or energy in disciplining its members to conform to the criteria of membership, in particular the failure of some members to give up foreign military bases (or "facilities") or removing foreign military forces on their soil. The NAM has tolerated for too long the violation of these criteria in, for Ethiopia, Saudi Arabia, instance, Egypt, Morocco, and perhaps, Pakistan too. They have all permitted themselves to be used as an instrument of the 'strategic consensus" of the one or the other superpower. The NAM has ignored the violation by some nonaligned states of the norm of non-use or, threat of, force against a fellow member of the NAM — Vietnam in Kampuchea, Cuba in Ethiopia (partly with the connivance or assistance of the

MAINSTREAM May 13, 1989

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long years the induction (allegedly with the connivance of non-aligned Afghanistan) of Soviet forces in Afghanistan, and of US forces in Grenada (1983). The NAM tolerated for nine long years the violation of the norm of peaceful settlement of disputes by Iran and Iraq: its attempts to end the war bore no fruit for years, with no attempt to discipline these errant members of the NAM by, for instance, suspending their membership of the Movement.

The fact that the United Nations (and regional organisations) too failed to discipline the errant states is no adequate mitigation of the failures of.

the NAM.

And what has happened to the South-South economic cooperation? Precious little-with the result, the non-aligned states have little or no "sanction" of sorts against the indifference of the developed states to the absence of any movement in the proposed North-South dialogue or mutual economic cooperation. Many of these are unable or unwilling to get rid of their neo-colonialist economic constraints, which have compromised their non-alignment.

Similarly, there is a danger of non-aligned states being overcome by euphoria over the new detente between the superpowers and the military blocs they head. Certainly, while the new detente is most welcome (partly because it, unlike the earlier detente of the 1970s, has wider and more beneficial fall-out on the rest of the world community, than merely improving the bilateral relations of the superpowers), the non-aligned states should not be blown off their non-aligned feet. However, it is, as yet, uncertain if the new detente will last; the UN Secretary-General has rightly warned in a New Delhi speech the world community about the fragility of this new development. For, after all, it has not altered the fundamental nature of the game of power politics of the superpowers; of which the nonaligned states are usu-

All the more, it is a great pity that the attention of the nonaligned states is being sought to be diverted from such vital issues to (hopefully) improving the efficiency of the functioning of the NAM. The NAM ought not to be the victim of managerial techniques. Certainly, some improvements in the methods/procedures (as for example, shorter and less wordy declarations) will do some good. But they are of marginal significance. On the other hand, introduction of decisions by voting (replacing the present consensual procedure) can actually divide NAM membership. Seeking to establish a Secretariat for the NAM is not necessarily going to help, for instance, such political issues as the enforcement of peaceful settlement of disputes or prevention of violation of criteria of membership by some member states. There is also a danger of a NAM bureaucracy constraining the present flexibility and authority of heads of states and governments or Foreign Ministers who represent member-states. The real issue regarding peaceful settlement of disputes, for instance, is not the need for procedural innovations (as successive NAM Summits and other Conferences have been pretending) but the political will to resort only to peaceful methods which have already been

Soviet Union). The NAM has given and the Charter "negotiation enquiry, mediation the UN Charter: "negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or other peaceful means of their own choice". The NAM conferences have been regularly insisting on peaceful settlement of disputes, but some members have been regularly violating this norm with complete immunity from any penalty or dis-

Similarly, it is lack of political will that is prevent. ing members of the NAM from promoting economic cooperation between and among fellow members and other third world states — not lack of adequate procedures or institutional mechanism. If many members of the NAM continue to violate human rights with impunity, the problem is not the need for some procedural innovations (of which the United Nations organs have done quite adequately) but the inability of the NAM to warn or discipline the guilty members.

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The unfortunate fact is that the NAM (like international organisations generally) has fallen into the rut of institutionalisations and search for improving methods and procedures for the functioning of the Movement, instead of enforcing some discipline among its members to conform to, or promote, the criteria of membership or recommendations of its Summit and other Conferences. It is not enough to lay down norms of functioning; what is needed is their enforcement. What is the sanctity of the membership of the NAM, if many of them have violated for years the criteria about not permitting foreign military forces or the location of foreign military bases on one's soil (or becoming a party to the "strategic consensus" of a superpower! Now and why are members using force to settle disputes — even between fellow members - being permitted to continue their membership of NAM! It is the continued toleration of, or silence over, the violation of these norms that has brought const derable discredit to the policy and Movement of the NAM.

One gets the suspicion that the new pre-occupation with methods/procedures, allegedly for improving the efficiency of the NAM Organs, is an attempt to cover up their failures (as for example; in enforce ment of peaceful settlement of disputes) by diverting attention to the alleged need for improving methods and procedures of functioning. The protagonists of these procedural innovations seem to believe that introduction of more committees, of the frequency of the NAM organs, will improve the efficiency of the NAM, white all that they are likely to do is to increase the number of meetings and give the feeling that the objectives of the NAM are being promoted

Some of them also seem to believe that the Main do better by can do better by initiating the allegedly more efficient organisational standard organisation standard o organisational structures and methods of the NATO and the Warsay D and the Warsaw Pact. For one thing, these later work largely in section 2. work largely in secrecy and one cannot fairly assess their working as being and one cannot fairly assess. their working as being more efficient. Secondly, for the NAM even to a more efficient. the NAM even to pretend to copy the so-called more efficient methods as the so-called more efficient methods as the so-called more efficient methods. efficient methods of the cold war blocs is plainly (Contd. on page 39)

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page 29)

Why Mujahideen got bogged in Jalalabad

M. YASSIN BIDAR

This is an on-the-spot assessment of the present conflict in Afghanistan by an Afghan journalist who worked for several years in New Delhi as the correspondent of the Bakhtar news agency.

- Editor

THREE months after the Soviet troop withdrawal from Afghanistan, the opposition mujahideen forces have not yet been able to capture a single

Afghan town and set up their base there.

Jalalabad which is less than ninety kilometres from the Pakistan border, was expected to be captured immediately after the Soviet military withdrawal from the country in the first week of February. Actually, the Soviet troops had withdrawn from the city of Jalalabad as early as May 10 last year, that is about a year ago. At that time Gulbudeen Hekmatyar had assured that the city would fall on May 20. But that did not happen.

Next the opposition had predicted the capture of Jalalabad on March 9 — that is, within four weeks of the total Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan. But they went on shifting the date of the promised

capture until they ceased to set a date at all.

It was not that the opposition mujahideen forces were weak in number. In the first assault, they had thrown in about 15 thousand men backed by two divisions (No 11 and 18) of the Pakistan Army. In fact, the operation is believed to have been masterminded by General Hameed Gul, the head of the Pakistan military intelligence, widely known as the ISI (Inter-Services Intelligence).

Why did the opposition plan of the capture of Jalalabad go wrong? For the past ten years, the opposition leaders were claiming that the Kabul Government was just a puppet of the Soviets, and they went on saying that with the Russian withdrawal, the major Afghan cities like Jalalabad, Kandahar and Kabul would quickly fall, that a the oppositer would desert the Afghan Army and the opposition forces would be hailed by the city populace as the liberators.

These hopes were buttressed by Western agencies Particularly the all-knowing CIA. Consequently, the Western Western diplomatic missions promptly evacuated their staff C. their staff from Kabul, as they were sure that the city Would fall in the very first mujahideen attack to be synchronical in the very first mujahideen attack to be synchronised with an uprising within the city. This plan was that the hurriedly set up interim Government would be rushed from Rawalpindi where it would be rushed from Rawalpindi where it was installed and in no time the Arab countries as well as the Western states would extend recognition to that interim government. The US Administration went a step further and appointed an ambassador to the interim government.

The reasons for the mujahideen forces' inability so far to break through and capture Jalalabad, not to speak of Kabul, are worth noting as they provide an insight into the present realities in Afghanistan. In fact, it is learnt that the sober-minded mujahideen commanders started reviewing the situation once they got bogged on the Jalalabad front. They threw the blame on General Hameed Gul for having imposed the war on them, while they themselves were not ready for it. This is partly true, because General Hameed Gul had planned the operation in consultation with only a few opposition leaders like Gulbudeen Hekmatyar, without taking into confidence other opposition leaders and local commanders.

A careful analysis of the situation brings out

certain significant points:

1. There is an Afghan saying that when a guerilla opts for regular war that would be his end. This is exactly what has happened in Jalalabad where a large number of mujahideen forces who had no experience of a regular war were mechanically put together and passed off as a regular army which had to face the Afghan Government forces with ten years of training and experience.

2. There is a total lack of a centralised command. It is an open secret that the seven mujahideen groups do not take orders from the interim government's Defence Minister, and instead each group operates independently and according to its own wishes and interest. The old slogan which had bound these groups together was to end the Soviet occupation and save Afghanistan for Islam. Now with the Soviet withdrawal, that slogan is no longer valid.

Instead has come the objective of overthrowing the Kabul Government and taking over political power. To this end each group tries to achieve something for its own interest. In other words, members of the mujahideen alliance have started competing with each other and mostly pulling the carpet from under the feet of their rival groups. Some of the groups because of tribal affiliation kept away from the operation as they did not have much stake in fighting for the capture of

3. The opposition groups and the Pak SIS badly understimated the strength of the present Afghan (continued on page 29)

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13

Our Withering Cultural Roots

JAGMOHAN

OF all the tasks of rebuilding India, the most important one relates to the cultural roots of the nation. If these roots are weak, the structures of all components of state power are bound to be so as well. If there is a poison in the blood-stream, all organs are bound to be infected, and the body is bound to develop deformities.

If, therefore, we wish to tackle the problems of national reconstruction in an effective manner, we have first to take care of our current cultural roots - those that shape and sustain all institutions of state power.

Every institution has its physical structure and an underlying spirit — a body and a soul. Most of our current institutions have kept their physical structures intact but their underlying spirit has gradually vanished.

Apart from the importance of the structure of the institutions, it is the spirit with which these institutions are run that really matters. In the absence of proper spirit, the institutions intended to serve a particular cause, happen to serve the opposite cause. The environment of spiritual exhaustion influences each and every institution and saps its underlying inspiration.

Look at the executive. Its basic objective is to do field work, to implement, to administer, to develop, and to undertake welfare and relief work at the grass roots. But what does it do in practice? It weaves a Kafkaesque world of papers around it. The red tape fogs its vision. It stumbles from one false step to another. In spite of frequent sniping by the Press and Parliament, its productivity goes on declining.

Our implementation of development projects is a classic example of executive inffectiveness. Delays in implementation range from six months to three years and the costs exceed the estimates as much as by 300 to 600 per cent.

Take another institution - media. It should emancipate man and develop his personality, educate and inform him about the truth, broaden his outlook, inspire him with high ideals, elevate him morally, socially and intellectually, improve his aesthetic perceptions, help him in evolving a fair and just order in which there is no fear, intimidation or coercion. But does this underlying inspiration exist? Certainly not.

On the contrary, quite a sizable section of the media is promoting, wittingly or unwittingly, reli-

The author is the Governor of Jammu and Kashmir. This is based on his inaugural address, at a recent seminar on "National Building Development Process and Communication" at Jammu, gious conservatism amongst the poor and unbridled consumerism among the upper classes. Instead of becoming a source of wisdom and light, a section of the media is becoming no more than a lamp that can set the house on fire.

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The contemplated institution of Panchayat Rai could become an instrument of mass mobilisation for rural development programme. But, if a healthy social and cultural environment is not simultaneous ly created, it could cause tension and friction.

When Swami Vivekananda talked of divinity in every man and woman, when he talked of God not as a symbol of power over man but of man's own power, he really gave cultural roots to the concepts of the equality, liberty and fraternity. When we shut our ears to the voices like those of Vivekananda, we damaged the roots of these concepts and converted them into empty rhetoric.

Today, our country requires a new cultural thrust, a new creative impulse, and another renaissance which would be far more pervasive and potent than we have so far seen in our history. Then alone will our institutions find their own moorings and realise the basic objectives for which they have been created,

Another important plank of national reconstruction is the education. Notwithstanding our claim about spread of education, what we are really doing is indeed unjust, unfair and cruel. I consider it necessary to abolish the elite school system.

With the lowering of the voting age from 21 to 18 years, 4.7 crore young men and women will become part of the electoral process. If they continue to get bad education, they will largely become a class of sullen and irritated voters. And this would further undermine the roots of democracy, peace and progress.

While the common identity of the poor his illiteracy, hunger, disease, and shelter is being underplayed, regional, ethnic and caste identities are being overplayed.

Unfortunately, we have become prisoners of old reflexes — the ones that we developed during the colonial time. colonial time, that we imported after independence, that are inherent in that are inherent in our worship of 'gods' and gods' of Western ideologies. It is a look of these gods' of Western ideologies. It is because of these reflexes that we are the second strift reflexes that we are creating a spurious and suit-

We have to get rid of these reflexes. We have to look to our real heritage that lies embeded in the ancient thought. ancient thought. It is this thought that provides the concept of unities concept of unities in diversities — unity in the diversity of man; unity in the diversity of natural unity i unity in the diversity of religion. It is this (continued on page 2)

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was listening intently to I friends who represented our neighbours at the recent Asia-Pacific Conference for Peace, Security and Development in New Delhi. This was a conference to discuss frankly and with candour how near we should be and how distant we are. The only thoughts that I had in my mind were memories of abiding affection and understanding that I had found in Pakistan when I had an occasion to visit Lahore to attend a Conference on Human Rights. It was expected that President Ishaq Khan would call upon Benazir Bhutto to be sworn in as Prime Minister. But, those were the moments of uncertainty and apprehensive negotiations. For us in India restoration of democracy in Pakistan had roused great hopes of resuming the warm relationship of friendship and understanding. In that conference, we were to discuss in a commission the recommendations we should make for the forthcoming SAARC summit to be held in Islamabad shortly thereafter.

I happened to visit Bank of Pakistan in Lahore for changing money. I was happily surprised to be received with unusual kindness by the bank official across the counter. He not only expressed his joy with smile but was embarrassingly kind to take the trouble of moving from officer to officer and making it possible for me to receive the little money in Pakistani currency for a few dollars that I wanted to change. Finding him so friendly, I could not resist the temptation of asking him; "What will be our relations in future?"

The author is Advocate of the Supreme

He smiled and with extreme courtesy answered: "What you are expecting shall not happen!" He had no difficulty in understanding that I wanted more warmth and more friendship. Perhaps, he too was sorry why that should be so difficult. But, he was categorical that it was wellnigh impossible.

I was indeed discourteously inquisitive to insist: "After all, why not?" His answer straight: "You are a big country. Your relations with Soviet Union make you stronger. You never hesitate to receive all kinds of arms to make your country stronger. We are a small nation. Whenever we receive arms from United States, such noises are made, that we naturally feel, it never occurs to you what our feelings are when you receive military supplies from the Soviet Union." No further discussion was either necessary or possible. We exchanged smiles and I left the bank.

For the first time I realised, how difficult it was to win hearts and minds if distrust was not destroyed. The same feeling came to my mind with even more inexorable logic when a delegate from Nepal in the Asia and Pacific Conference at Delhi protested loudly against India's size and power, which was used to threaten the national interests of Nepal. The situation became even more embarrassing and made me feel smaller than ever before, when I heard a confident Indian reply to the Nepalese delegate, more with arrogance than confidence: "Is it our sin that our size is big? Have we to bend on our knees before smaller nations merely because we are stronger?" I felt ashamed of myself as an Indian and I asked for C-0. the thought and the Collection, Haridwar

The delegate from Pakistan was in the chair. He graciously gave me the opportunity. The delegate from Nepal had spoken. The delegates from Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, from Thailand and New Zealand were in the audience. So were the Vietnamese, the Kampucheans and the Cubans. How best could I make amends so that this conference was not disrupted by our intolerable arrogance and total lack of sympathy for the justified feelings of our dear neighbours? I took the floor and reminded ourselves that we are dealing with sovereign nations. Sovereignty was not divisible. All nations, big and small, are equally sovereign. It is a matter of shame for us if our size and our strength evokes "fear" and "distrust" in our neighbours. We could ill-afford to forget that our strength was made possible by the freedom we have won. To defend our own freedom, it was equally essential that our neighbours are no less free and no less independent. If at all by our lack of foresight and unwarranted arrogance we inspired emotions of distrust and suspicion against India in the hearts of our neighbours, there are enough powerful forces in the world who can reassure these neighbours that their strength would always be available against India. We would, therefore, not only be losing the love, affection and trust of our neighbours, but we were bound to find ourselves in confrontation with our enemies protected by the hostility evoked by our arrogant assertion of "our size" and "our power". Nothing can please our enemies more.

Surely, it is our duty to feel and make others feel that our size and our power are as well the strength of our neighbours. Their sorrows are OUL SOT- rows. Their happiness, our happiness too. It was only till yesterday that all of us - big and small - were compelled to live for centuries under the basis of powers that have acquired even more power today. They have given up the designs either to dominate us even more ruthlessly or to exploit us even more mercilessly. These sombre reflections chasten our thoughts and our conduct with our neighbours.

We have limitless human resources. All of us together have resources. unlimited natural What we lack is the necessary finance, because, even after independence, our wealth has continued to flow out of our sovereign nations far beyond the limits of tolerance than was our fate before we won the freedom after the Second World War.

If we are honest with our own people, it is impossible to forget that we have yet to wipe every tear from every eye. Our poverty is intolerable and our men are not willing to wait. Such are the democratic pressures of demands

of social justice.

How much of our scarce resources have we not been wasting in arming ourselves so that we don't find ourselves insecure against our big and small neighbours? How long can we allow bloodbath to go on in Afghanistan, specially after the harrowing experience of Iran and Iraq? Can we forget that the very forces which engaged us for long years in the Iran-Iraq war, would be too happy to organise an even more powerful, unending destruction of life and property in Afghanistan, in Kashmir and in Punjab and, if possible, in the rest of India? But, without our own insanity, they cannot succeed to impose war or civil war. The destruction of life in Sri Lanka was responsible for the "controversial" presence of the Indian forces there. Despite our best intentions and the compulsions faced by President Jayewardene. we cannot prevent the world projecting India as an oppressive "superpower" in the region. It suits them to do so. Our response to the situation in Maldives could not be assessed only in terms of the then prevailing violence was different diomydwabe small in thoughts of the then prevailing violence was different diomydwabe small in thoughts

can be made jealous of clout" even to defend peace.

Lessons of it were spelt out differently, so that India is understood to be a potential danger of diabolic dimensions. The rest begins to follow thereafter. Their obvious attempt will be organised in South Asia and, indeed in the whole of Asia and the Pacific that Asia never settles down to have durable conditions of peace, security and development. After all, Asia the Asia-Pacific region can produce more than half the industrial and agricultural wealth of the world. That can end the domination of

I must confess that our common tragedies and the deep wounds of bitterness have not made us really wiser yet.

The participants at this conference in New Delhi realised that distrust and suspicion and all reasons for distrust and suspicion must be destroyed, so that peace and freedom for us all becomes indivisible. This process must begin and gain momentum if suicide is not a deliberate choice we wish to make.

This conference was not an isolated event. In the last four decades, all of us have been victims of expanding frontiers of selfish narrow ambitions sustained by power politics. Has not the time come when Europe must restructure its economics, politics and also minimum defence on the obvious principle of "Europe our common home"? If that happens, Germany shall insist on removing missiles from its soil, Can, then, the NATO survive? If the NATO does not survive, where is the need for the Warsaw Pact?

When the NATO came into existence, the CENTO, SEATO and the military triangle in the Far-East were only its logical extension, to realise Pak Americana. But, today, the world in changing. It is to be hoped that confrontation will yield place to creative cooperation. That is not possible without banishing war or violence.

To create a world without wars and violence, violence in thought must go. The language of nonand minds of men, nations cannot be freed from planning disas. ter and destruction of each other.

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More democracy, more debate, more dialogue, even ferocity in tempers are a tolerable substitute for coldblooded blood-bath. Discussions with complete candour and free from fear may succeed eventually in creating powerful structures to make Asia and the Pacific a real "heaven of peace" If China, the Soviet Union and India move closer, I see no power on earth reversing this steadly movement to make world a better place for all men.

We are witnessing fundamental changes in thoughts, responsible for changing doctrines of defence. of foreign policy and for economic cooperation fundamentally, The struggle for it cannot be smooth. Past habits die hard, But, the undying faith in the destructive forces to make men unhappy and forever is drying up very fast. Defiance of human spirit for freedom and democracy is emerging as an invincible force

of history.

The acceptance of the fundamental basis of human happiness and human rights is increasingly becoming universal. Power is permissible only to reinforce the human effort for greater happiness

India has a great responsibility on this count. We shall succeed or fail only to the extent we win or fail to win the hearts and minds of our big and small neigh bours to continue the march together towards our common destinies. Who else will do it, if we the children of Gandhi and Gautama Budda prove unworthy of this intensely human legacy and betray the vision of Nehru who dreamt and lived for one world, not two worlds or three worlds.

Our wisdom should not fail us to understand our neighbours their concerns and their anxieties and fears even better than they can. Our vision must be our guide to find just answers to all problems lems and durable solutions as good as they would have found for themselves. This is the responsibility lity imposed on us by our size and our powers. We cannot afford to

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SUNIT GHOSH

WHAT immediately strikes a stranger to Jerusalem is the blocks of sleek stone houses is the blocks of sleek stone houses with solar heater pannels atop. In the political capital of Israel it is a must for a citizen to use "Jerušalem stones" while building his house, for this sacred city still remains the only spiritual centre and source of inspiration to Jews all over the world.

And, solar heater has become a part of Israel's life. Mass scale use of solar energy for heating water has yielded dividends in the form of a considerable saving on fuel. Israel is, perhaps, among the few countries in the world where research in solar energy has brought about tangible benefits to the people. This is just one of the areas of science and technology where Israel has not only caught up with the highly developed countries but promises to even overtake them.

A visit to the Canadian Institute for the Energies and Applied Research, located in the campus of the famous Weizmann Institute of Science at Rehovot, about 14 kilometres from Tel Aviv, is a fulfilling experience. It gives a fair idea of how the world's smallest democracy is preparing for the day about sixty years hence when the world will find itself running out of conventional oil and natural gas because of a steady depletion in world's

fossil-fuel reserve.

Taking us, the four journalists from India, round the prestigious centre the Russian-born-scientist, Prof Israel Dostrovosky, explained the problem succintly: "The political and economic repercussions of future shortage of conventional oil and natural gas are bleak enough. But the continued widespread use of fossil-oil also poses a grave threat to atmosphere. Increase in the level of carbon dioxide the product of fossil-fuel combustion) may raise global temperatures and affect the world's climate such an extent that entire areas of the earth could be transformed into deserts, and low-lying coastal areas could be flooded. Such a prospect calls for development of alternate sources of energy to replace oil, gas and coal. But from the moment an idea for a new process or technology is hatched in the laboratory, it takes decades until it can be implemented. implemented commercially on a large scale. This means that is means that if we are to avert a global crisis in the next century we must begin to develop and test alternate energy sources now. The alternative is

The author is Chief of the New Delhi Bureau of the noted Bengali daily, Anand Bazar Patrike Patrika, published from Calcutta. He recently visited to published from Calcutta. visited Israel as a member of a team of Indian journalist as a member of a team of Indian Journalists invited by the Israeli Government for a tour of that country.

to find ourselves powerless to respond to what is likely to be one of the most, if not the most, urgent challenges facing mankind. At present we know of only two major non-fossil sources of energy with the potential to provide for all mankind's future needs: nuclear energy and solar energy. The latter is at the focus of our research at the Weizmann Institute's energy centre where the dedicated scientists are working to harness the sun, to convert solar radiation to laser light and for converting solar energy into energy-rich chemicals."

It was quite clear from what he said that the 54-metre high majestic solar tower overlooking the spacious heliostat field with a sixty-four computercontrolled mirrors, each of them 56 square metres in area, with curbed surfaces reflecting and focussing sunlight onto one or more targets, the huge furnace for concentrating sun's power and other combined installations and facilities give the Institute an unique advantage in the quest for new methods of attaining the large scale utilisation of solar energy in the coming decades.

Prof Dostrovosky has never been to India. He was simply thrilled to know that in India we have plenty of sun throughout the year. "Then you can

do wonders," he said.

Named after Israel's first scientist, President Chaim Weizmann, who had discovered acetone and helped Britain win the First World War, the Institute is noted all over the world for its tremendous contribution to the world of science. It grew out of the Daniel Sieff Research Institute founded in 1934 by Dr Chaim Weizmann. The Sieff Institute was established in memory of Daniel Sieff by his parents Israel and Rebecca Sieff. On November 2, 1949 the Weizmann Institute was formally dedicated on the 70th birthday of the President. Technically, the Institute in its present form came into being soon after the state of Israel was born about 41 years ago. But long before the birth of Israel, Chaim Weizmann, who had played a great part in pushing through the Belfour Declaration, made it clear to the Jews that the "creation of scientific institutions in Palestine is essential if we are to insure intellectual survival of the Jewish people. It may take us as many as fifty years to regain our strength in the field, and the only hope is that men of high qualifications who came to us will influence the young generation of Palestine in the direction of skill, discipline, order and high quality performance."

As matter of fact, the highly motivated people of Israel took less than forty years to regain their strength in the realm of intellect as visualised by Weizmann. Within forty years of its existence.

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Israel has come up not only as a power to be reckon with in the Middle Eastgittentbyahra Samerfooddationkehetahisystemangotri the most advanced nations of the world in the field of science, technology, medicine and agriculture. The trials the state has undergone might have been harsher than Weizmann imagined. But the development of science and technology-from computercontrolled drip irrigation to pioneer magnetic resonance imaging and from advances in molecular biology to new concepts of mathematical proof would probably have astonished him. Simply amazing has been the progress in the development of mathematics which, like several other major research areas, was launched at the Institute in 1948. The products and processes emerging from the Institute's laboratories are patented by the Yeda Research and Development Company which seeks funds to finance projects of an allied nature from investors interested in using the results of such research for the production and marketing of products. Yeda is among the 30 firms located in Kirvat Weizmann, the nearby industrial park that the Institute was instrumental in establishing.

Researches

over the millenia.

Researches in other areas like cancer, environment, immunology, heart disease, physics, computers, etc. have made notable breakthrough. Studies in cancer showed the possibility of transforming certain cancerous cells back into normal ones. Other promising developments in this field include: fresh approaches to the problem of metastasis, production of antibody preparations for detecting certain cancer-associated antigens in the blood, design of new ways to stimulate the immune system to better recognise and destroy threatening tumour cells, and basic experiments to help explain how tumour viruses attack the cell's genetic apparatus and cause malignancy.

The environment scientists investigate the country's hydrology and geology and suggest ever-more sophisticated ways of safeguarding the precious water-reserves. These experts trace ground water movement, study the dead sea waters, probe the paths by which precipitation reaches Israel and the changes that have taken place in the climate of the Middle East

The immunologists seek to learn more about how antibodies are formed and how they fight the invasion of disease-producing agents. Their researches are aimed at solving the riddle of immunological rejection, developing precise immunological means of diagnosing and treating disease (including parasitic infections that ravage so much of the Third World) and realising the dream of a synthetic vaccine to provide effective immunity against diseases without recourse to killed or "weakened" viruses. The Institute's biologists explore the aging process in all its ramifications, on the systematic, organic, cellular and molecular.

Special attention is paid to changes in the brain and nervous system as well as to immunological disorders leading to the increased vulnerability of older people to serious infections and disease. In a surprising new finding recently the researchers have

discovered unsuspected link between sex and the

In the area of physics, the Institute's scientists working with some of the most advanced apparatus available today, including a powerful heavy-ion accelerator on campus and giant accelerators in Europe and the US, carry on investigations into the world of nuclear and subnuclear particles. Improve ing man's understanding of the behaviour of galaxies is the particular domain of the astrophysicists. while their colleagues in applied physics pursue such fields as phase transitions and the onset of chaos. holography, fiber optics, microwave antennas, and

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image processing technologies. In the field of computers Israel is much ahead of many advanced countries. Having built Israel's first computing machine in the fifties, the Institute has gone on to play a leading role in the world computer scene. The Institute's computer scientists are developing more appropriate languages for use of tomorrow's computers and providing novel cryptographic techniques for securing confidential data flow between the computers. These experts also delve into the logic of programming and contribute to the exciting field of artificial intelligence. Under the direction of Chaim Pekeris, the founder of the Mathematics Department, and with the help of several Faculty members, notably Smil Ruhman, three large computers were built at the Institute. These were used to explore mathematical problems ranging from an analysis of oceanic tides and oscilations within the earth's crust to precise calculation of the structure of the second smallest atom, helium. The Institute is no longer building computer, for such matters have been taken up by the commercial

using computers is still on. Apart from their academic pursuits, the early Weizmann mathematicians used to take part in Using his expertise practical matters of Israeli life. in geo-science, Chem Pekeris organised a team of researchers to search for oil and water in Israel Members of the Mathematics Faculty continue to take an active part in Israel's economic life, though in a different sense. Three new high-tech companies, it may be mentioned, are based on the decisive consultation of the Weizmann Computer scientists.

companies. Yet the search for more effective ways of

Science Bias

For a population of forty lakhs, about a third of the population of greater Calcutta, Israel has seven world-standard accredited institutions of higher learning. The Hebrew University at Jerusalem, the Tel Aviv University, the Bar llan University at Ramal Gan, the Haifa University and the Bengurion Versity of Nacroll as versity of Nagev offer general studies as well as specialised curricula in medicine, pharmacology natural sciences, social sciences, dentistry and agriculture. The Tecnicon — Institute of Technology at Haifa at Haifa — concentrates on science, engineering and medicine while the Weizmann Institute offer post-graduate degrees based on scientific research In all these institutions the academic atmosphere is simply "fantastic" t simply "fantastic", to quote Venky Ramakrishna, an Indian student who is a little Venky Ramakrishna. Indian student who is doing his PhD in Bio-Chemis

tty in the Weizmann Institute.

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free to take up research in any field of their choice free to take of their choice without being bogged down to his original discipline, without boing object and to his original discipline.
Eminent mathematician, Dr Alexander Lerner, who emigrated from Soviet Russia, is now working in the Weizmann Institute on an ambitious project aimed at developing an artificial heart. Himself a heart patient, Dr Lerner is convinced that it is possible to develop an artificial heart more reliable than the human heart. He and two of his colleagues have also worked out a mathematical method for predicting the behaviour of developed communities. He is taking the theory a step further by developing a model for the ideal political system for Israel, taking into account the special characteristics and needs of the country.

Although all the disciplines in science and humanities are taught in the Israeli universities there is a marked emphasis on science. The Israelis believe that the universities must provide the scientific, infrastructure which is necessary to build a scientific community required by a modern state. And this hias on science has led to the emergence of a highly sophisticated technological society in Israel that can

face up to any challenge.

Brain Drain

However, many Israeli scientists are not happy over the present state of science in the country which, they believe, is on the decline. It is felt that sufficient funds are not made available for scientific research as a result of which today a considerable

number of scientists spend only a part of year in The academics enjoy completent freedom sand Faredation taches descendings. Real research they conduct in the laboratories which hardly bring any scientific benefit to Israel. Summing up the problem, Professor Ephrahim Katzir, a prominent scientist who was the fourth President of Israel, said: "There is a popular belief that poverty is good for poets, stimulating their creativity. I am not sure that this is entirely true of poets, but I am absolutely certain that scientists do not benefit from poor material condition. When a scientist worry about how to get through the month or when he has to hold down two jobs to make a reasonable living, the chances that he will fully utilise his scientific creativity and potential are not exactly great. In addition, since the language of science is international and there are places where an outstanding scientist can obtain suitable conditions and realise his potentiality, we suffer from a constraint of brain drain.'

> Underlining the importance of placing scientific activity higher on the national agenda Prof Katzir said: "Do not forget that our agricultural achievements were due, in no small part, to research and development. Let us not forget either that our sophisticated industries relied, and continue to rely, on scientific and technological innovations. This is not a self-regenerating resource. If we do not continuously replenish it, if we do not persist in accumulating know-how in various fields, the inevitable result is stagnation leading, in turn, to regression".

> There is, however, no indication as yet that "stagnation" has set in.

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MAINSTREAM May 13, 1989

Refuting the Revisitation

K.D. MAJUMDAR

Mainstream (March 25, 1989) carried a contribution by Neville Maxwell, the well-known journalist whose book India's China War had touched off intense controversy. It was published with the hope that it would provoke discussion on the Sino-Indian border dispute. Here is a rejoinder from a distinguished retired military officer. —Editor

Having convinced himself that India is wrong, Neville Maxwell ("India's China Border Dispute Revisited", Mainstream, March 25, 1989) can be hardly expected to write anything else but to suit facts to his theories. As far Marxwell is concerned, whatever India does or does not do, she is wrong. One cannot match his wit (or sarcasms), or his high level sources who fuel him with inside information not available to ordinary Indians, but it is difficult to accept everything he propounds. It is clearly impracticable to go into the history of the Sino-Indian border in an article of this nature — and there is no dearth of material including the one given in Maxwell's book — but even at the risk of being accused of gullibility to official misinformation, one may take up a few issues raised by Maxwell.

The first question is: as far as the alignment of the border goes, is India perpetuating a myth created by Imperial Britain? Of course, there is no agreed treaty between China and Britain, but that does not necessarily mean that there were no borders.

In Ladakh, it cannot be disputed that there was a traditional frontier, a zone rather than a line, but still a border of sorts, which included Aksai Chin and the Lingi Lang plains. Starting from the boundary commission of 1847, Britain made a number of attempts to get China to agree to a delimited border. When Johnson drew his ill-famous Johnson Line, he had done so following his traverse though Aksai Chin (Lo Khotan) and taking into account the traditional frontier. Johnson's surveys of the Karakorams were questioned later, but his definition of the boundary in the East was not doubted. That the boundary was shifted westward by Macartney can be attributed to poor knowledge of the geography of that area and absence of reliable maps. Furthermore, politically, in the last decade of nineteenth century, when the great game was supposed to have reached this area. Britain saw China as the buffer between the Russian and the British empires. Hence there was a desire not to stir up any controversy with China.

A minor but significant point to note is that Haaji Langar was established by Johnson. He would have hardly done so (he was not on a military expedi-

Major General K.D. Majumdar AVSM (Retd.) is currently Adviser, Defence Services Banking.

tion) unless he thought the area to be within the Kashmir government's territory. Several other Western explorers, even Hedin for instance, also thought so. It seems to be totally forgotten that delimitation of the boundary in this area was the culmination of a process started by the signing of the Leh Agreement of 1942 between Ghulab Singh and the Tibetans, later ratified by China and Britain.

Britain did not acquire Aksai Chin — by establishing a linear boundary, she was trying to prevent clashes between Ladakhis (and the Dogra Army) and the Tibetans'. Independent India, arguably, should not have been so rigid in insisting of the exact alignment of the boundary, as she did in the fifties; but then China also had no unilateral rights to construct a road through Aksai Chin, imperiously assuming it to be within her territory.

(I have not had the opportunity of reading John Lall's book as yet reviewed in the same issue; but it would appear to be his conclusion also, that Aksai China formed a part of Ladakh.)

As far as imperialistic expansion goes, there is substance in the accusation, at least on the face of it, that the Tawang tract was arbitrarily included within the McMahon Line. There are a few inter-related issues here; the first being the much maligned Simla Conference and the McMahon Line itself. Admittedly, there was a certain amount of arm-twishing by the British to get the Chinese representative to initial the convention and the maps. But what is often lost sight of is the fact that main Chinese worry was not the Indo-Tibet border alignment; but the fear of division of Tibet into outer and inner Tibet. One may not be totally incorrect to surmise that the main reason why Ivan Chen was not made privy to the delimitation of the Indo-Tibet border (McMahon Line) was that no such need was felt!

This, of course, brings in the main issue regarding the validity of McMahon Line — whether or not Tibet had independent treaty-making powers. China naturally denies it. Much is also made of Anglo Russian Convention of 1907, in which Britain agreed to keep out of Tibet, or not to deal with without Chinese concurrance. It is perhaps ironic that the 1907 Convention was drawn up not to grant any special rights to China but to keep Russia out of Tibet, and in the perception of the Government in London, not to overextend the resources of the

Empire. With revolutionary changes of the Governments both in Russia and China when the Simla Conference took place, Britain had no real obligations to follow the convention, although she did.

But coming back to the point, it is a historical fact that even when extracting tributes China did allow some of those tributary states the rights to enter into independent agreements and treaties. There are many examples, but the one nearest is the case of Nepal. Nepal was a tributary state of China, but made an independent boundary settlement with Britain after Anglo-Nepalese War (1814-16) and with the Tibeteans in the Tibeto-Nepalese Agreement of 1856. (The tributary status of Nepal or Chinese suzerainty had continued up to 1911, that is, the fall of Manchu dynasty, although it was never officially repudiated as such by Nepal). Tibet also signed an independent treaty with the Sikh durbar. (The Leh Agreement of 1842), which was later accepted by China. Much later, even though China continued to claim suzerainty over Tibet, she respected Tibet's semi-independent status — during the Second World War, Chiang kai-Shek did not agree to the establishment of a supply route through Tibet in defence to the wishes of Lhasa. It needs to be noted that neither China nor Britain need have asked Lhasa at all.

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It is also frequently lost sight of that the McMahon Line came into being — in fact the Simla Conference was convened — on account of the then perceived fear of Chinese expansion and their entry into the Brahmaputra valley through the Lohit valley or the Tawang route. Exploits of the Chinese general Chao esh-Feng who annexed, after three years of campaigning, the territories of the King of Chala and the marches of Ezechuan, and marched to Lhasa in 1910 (when Dalai Lama fled to Darjeeling) are rarely remembered. If McMahon appropriated by the stroke of a red pen, large areas of what is now known as Arunachal, let us not forget that the Chinese had done so in the neighbouring areas and Tibet, by the force of their arms.

It is doubtful if the states of Tawang in relation to the Governments of Lhasa and Peking can be fully unravelled. There were seven "Rajahs" but it was the Tawang monastery and the rimpoche who exercised both spiritual and temporal authority over the territory. The Tawang monastery owed allegiance to the Dalai Lama and paid religious tributes, but it collected taxes on its own. One doubts if the collected taxes on its own. doubts if abstract concepts like hegemony, suzerainty, protectorate, tributary status and the like were really understood or bothered them. They paid taxes only when Lhasa could extract it, otherwise and could extract it, otherwise and for all practical purposes, they did what they liked A for all practical purposes, they did what they liked! And claimed independence of both Tibet and

Relevant also to note is the fact that demarcation of the border of the Tawang tract was done as part of demarcation in the 1870s of the Indo-Bhutan border border in this part it was a verbal delimitation of the out in this part it was a verbal delimitation of the outer line as per the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation of the the Mompas and the Tibetans, and there was no objection when it was brought under the British sphere of influence, by including the area within the McMahon Line. The point needs to be made that the Tawang tract was not forcibly occupied and a civilised people forcibly subjugated; nor any treaty violated by extending the outer line to the edge of the Tibetan plateau. In fact, if the boundary were to be marked as the basis of the area under the effective control of the Tawang monstary in 1914, it should have been much further northwards.

The entire Chinese claim is based on the inner and the outer lines, defined by the British administration to ensure security of the tea gardens from marauding tribesmen. Although the outer lines came to be equated with demarcated boundaries. it was not intended to be so. Be that as it may, acceptance of McMahon Line as the boundary does not amount to acceptance of an unfair and unequal treaty, as claimed by the Chinese.

MAXWELL taunts Indian officials for questioning the Chinese an the "package". Of course, there is no "package", as it would be wrong to call the proposals a package, as it really amounts to an exchange of territory, or, recognition by China of the McMahon Line in exchange of acceptance by India the rights of China in Aksai Chin. The package was originated by China — it was implied in a number of notes exchanged in 1959-60, and stated more or less unambiguously by Chin en-Lai in the press conference after his visit to Delhi in 1960. Deng had also referred to it — the Indian press in 1981-82 used to call it the "Deng package". The "package" has been in the air for many years, at least in the public mind it is a possible solution as Maxwell seems also to suggest. Surely, India is entitled to ask China about the details of the 'package", however undiplomatic or maladroit the manner of questioning might have been. But, now it seems that there is no package, or there never was one! The Chinese in their "careful", "coincilatory" and "principled" approach have been also very flexible, by creating and cultivating "impressions" of proposals and retaining the privilege of removing them. Not many perhaps remember that during the 1954 trade talks, the Chinese declined to talk about the border by creating an impression that there were no disputes on the matter.

Since public memory is proverbially short, it would be worthwhile briefly to recapitulate the Sumdorong Chu incident, before taking up the larger issue of the Sumdorong Chu syndrome. India had established in 1984 a seasonal border observation post in Sumdorong Chu valley because of presistent reports (from graziers) and evidence of Chinese patrolling of this area. Sumdorong Chu, a minor tributary of Nyamjong Chu lies to the east of Thagla ridge. There are doubts as to the Regulations. It was not a delimitation of the east of Thagla ridge. There are nounts as to the ludo-Tibet border. There was no lowedlost between the Kexact of the McMahon Line in this

area, and the Colombo proposals had recommended that this area be negotiated. Therefore, it is to be admitted that like Longju it is a "disputed" area, even if the McMahon Line is accepted as the boundary.

However, the Chinese have never objected to another post in the same area - Khinzemane post. It was attacked and removed during the 1962 conflict, but re-established in 1963-64 and has functioned since then. Like Khinzemane post, the Sumdorong Chu post was manned entirely by civilians, not even by the Assam Rifles. What was the need of the Chinese to patrol this area (India was not doing so)? What was the need of setting up a permanent military picket in response to a civilian outpost? Of course, any Indian reaction has to be interpreted to be hostile and adverse, the Chinese ones are never to be so. Much has been made of "substantial" Indian troop movements. But the Chinese induction of five to six divisions of additional troops into Tibet has been conveniently ignored. Surely, the Chinese, the Western intelligence and anyone with even nodding acquintance of mountain warfare know that the Indian Army has no capability whatsoever for offensive action in the Himalayas. No Indian general, howsoever "Macho" or howkish, would contemplate it seriously. India just does not have sufficient troops even to match the Chinese troops permanently located in that area of Tibet, what to say of the additional forces inducted. But then should India have risked another 1962 in the fond hope of successful diplomacy and Chinese goodwill? Maxwell or his sources might like to answer.

But, of course, he is using the incident to raise the larger question of India establishing her rights by military means. But is it India that moves her troops in the first instance? It is not practicable in this article to go into the details of Indian troop deployment in the fifties in Ladakh and Arunachal (then NEFA). But it would be evident to anyone who cares to study the subject, that almost all Indian deployment was in response to Chinese movements. The forward policy of Krishna Menon and Kaul (unfortunately the policy has been popularly associated with them) was an amateurish attempt to block the Chinese; just as it was in Sumdorong Chu.

Furthermore, what was the Chinese explanation of the Kongka La and Hot Spring ambushes? The Indian public has also forgotten about the Tulang La ambush of 1975 — what caused the Chinese to kill a few Assam Rifles personnel (Assam Rifles is a para-military police force, not regular military) well to the south of McMahon Line? Admittedly, since the seventies, China has not taken any action, which, in the larger strategic sense, can be construed as an immediate threat, but until such time there is a settled boundary or a mechanism (lie flag meetings) to settle local disputes, India must take abundant precautions.

Maxwell has a simple prescription for settling the dispute — India should renounce her stance on the

McMahon Line. Apparently, President Gorbachev has been able to get the Chinese to agree to talks on the Sino-Soviet border dispute by doing something similar. One is not sufficiently familiar with the intricacies and details of the Sino-Soviet border dispute, but a reading of the brief exposition of it given by Alstair Lamb in his book. Asian Frontiers makes one wonder if it was all that simple. There is place for symbolic acts and gestures in diplomacy, but there is also much behind-the-scene activities prior to such public acts. In any event, Raijv Gandhi's China visit should also be seen as a symbolic act of friendship and desire to settle the dispute. And, what should India renounce - history, tradition, all her claims? What is the assurance that by removing her claims - an act of contribution as it were - even in private, India will get China to agree on a boundary more or less along the line of control as it exists now?

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If some sketchy media reports are to be believed. China now wants sector-by-sector discussions and settlement. In other words, keep what she already has in Ladakh; question the validity of the perception of common border passes in the central sector; renegotiate the Anglo-Chinese Convention of 1890 which settled Sikkim-Tibet border, or raise the fundamental issue of Sikkim's accession to India; and extract concessions in the east, for example, acquire Walong by conceding Tawang. Far fetched may be, but not inconceivable, especially if one keep in mind that China talks from a position of strength, India does not. Thanks to Maxwell and others of his ilk, China has been able to project an image of an aggrieved party, which has had to tolerate the tantrums of the Indian bully. But it is China which teaches others a "-lesson" remember Deng's statement about teaching Vietnam a lesson just as it was done to India.

All this, of course, sounds very self-righteous, hawkish and militant, well in line with this writer's background. But this is not a plea for a military solution. Geopolitical experts and arm chair strategists may see in the Sino-Indian border dispute an extension or a new version of the great game, and thus predict another armed clash, but few would subscribe to such theories. There must be a negotiated settlement, earlier the better, for a variety of reasons which should be self-evident. In the late fifties, India's public mood was hostile, and India's stand became rigid. The trauma of 1962 lasted for over a decade. But now it seems that the public mood has changed, it may be possible even to change the highly emotional resolution about recovering all lost territories, adopted by Parliament

The million dollar question is: where to start! It does not seem that the start has to be by renouncing the part, as Maxwell suggests, or by some such symbolic act. As he also recommends, very rightly, there has to be very patient negotiations on actualities. But the past cannot be forgotten. Then, not revive the Colombo proposals, which provided and recessiving formula for India and granted to China more or less what she marked?

ce her stance on the more or less what she wanted?

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Gandhi, Gorbachev and India Today-III

S.G. SARDESAI

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This is the third part of a pamphlet written by veteran CPI leader and Marxist ideologue S.G. Sardesai being serialised in Mainstream. The first and second parts appeared in the Mainstream issues of April 29, 1989 and May 6, 1989 respectively. -Editor

XII. Old Approach and New Reality

would like to give two more illustrations of how lour traditional approach does not fit into the

problems created by the new reality.

It is now tacitly accepted by Communists that socialism is not going to be initiated in India by an armed uprising, seizure of power by a workerpeasant alliance, and establishing the economic foundations of socialism by decree. Such an advance is no longer considered feasible and, in any case, it is highly unlikely.

But, if that is so, the inevitable question arises as to how we are to advance towards socialism. But this question is never even posed and discussed. It is true that no cut and dried scheme can be made for the advance, and any such plan would not be worth the paper on which it is written. But the broad per-

spective certainly demands consideration.

That perspective can only be of a persistent, long drawn out process of restructuring the existing economic, political, legal, constitutional and administrative structure of India through parliamentary and extra-parliamentary activity. This is not class collaboration but class struggle conducted in a new way. Obviously, such restructuring is not only going to be protracted. It implies innumerable transitional measures and stages progressively leading to the ultimate goal. And that, in its turn, calls for a professional and concrete study of each of these structures and the specific modifications that are feasible and necessary in existing conditions. Here, basic slogans, however correct, will not do. We are faced with a situation in which drastic, revolutionary transformations of the existing structures are not feasible, and yet their remoulding will have to be achieved through a long series of measures.

It is admitted on all hands that the aims of the Indian Constitution stated in its 'preamble' as the guiding principles' have not been achieved by the Constitution. But, we have not prepared integrated proposals for amending various sections of the Indian Constitution that will facilitate the achievement of its declared aims, and narrow the gap bet-

ween the aims and their achievement. Our fiscal system needs restructuring. We criticise the Central Budget year after year. The perenniar refrain is that it is pro-rich and anti-poor. But we never pro-rich and anti-poor which takes never prepare (broadly) a counter budget which takes into account (broadly) a counter budget which takes into account the existing constraints of the Indian situation of the existing constraints of the Indian situation, shows how some steps can be taken to shift the base of the shift the burden of taxation from the poor to the

rich (including the rich in the rural areas) and yet meet the budgetary needs of expenditure. We do not point out how the budgetary income can be used better for achieving growth with social justice. We do not have concrete proposals for narrowing the alarming budgetary deficit, for controlling inflation, and so on.

We have never prepared the broad outlines of a Five Year Plan that is feasible in present conditions and yet move India a few steps towards its accepted

goal.

One after another our public sector industries are going down the drain. Corruption and bureaucracy are there. But the problem of arbitrary and inconsistent policies is also there. Protest actions against privatisation alone will not suffice. We have to prepare concrete and integrated proposals dealing with all aspects of the public sector management. The demand for worker's participation in management has to be raised to a national political level. Such a participation is not just an extension of trade union activity. Worker's representatives in management have to be conversant with all aspects of management and capable of making suggestions for an all-round improvement in the efficiency of their particular industry.

We have been in power (such as it is) in two States for many long years. Our record is admittedly better than that of any other party at the State level. We introduce popular reforms and ameliorate the economic conditions of the people to the extent possible in the existing constitutional structure. But, for the rest, all that we do is to blame the Central Government for its discriminatory policy towards the Left Governments. No doubt we have made proposals for the States being given more economic and administrative powers. But they are piecemeal. They do not deal with the question of structural

changes in Centre-State relations.

The bureaucracy, our administrative structure and its functioning, need restructuring. The IAS and IPS are there. Their social composition, recruitment. rules and regulations have to be changed so as to make them more democratic and responsive to the needs and aspirations of the people. A new code of conduct has to be prepared for them. That will help to minimise the bureaucratic sabotage of progressive legislations. At least to a certain extent, the bureaucracy will become the servant of the people instead of being a despotic tyranny as it is at present. We have never given any thought to this question.

My point is that a full-fledged democratisation

the Indian economic. constitutionale administrative undapen collaboration with the workers. Was it and legal structure is indispensable for an advance towards socialism. And such allround democratisation is going to be a dogged, protracted process involving innumerable transitional measures. This calls for professional study and working out concrete proposals on all such questions. We have given no thought at all to this issue. We speak constantly about the constraints of the existing structures in the functioning of our State Ministries. But how are they to be removed? On that point all we do is to make some ad hoc, piecemeal proposals here and

In this connection I would like to refer to a recent incident which is very revealing in the sense that it illustrates how the compulsions of the new reality are forcing us to adopt new approaches to burning problems which face us. It also reveals that while we do adopt a new approach, we give no thought to the

generalised meaning of that approach.

The condition of Indian industries has deteriorated, probably more in West Bengal than any other State in India. There is no end to retrenchment, lock-outs and closures. Lakhs and lakhs have become unemployed. Cases of workers committing suicide in sheer desperation are not rare. Workers' strikes, though inevitable and justified, are losing their efficacy for securing their just demands. Paradoxically, in certain cases, they may even be playing into the hands of the employers who only want an excuse to declare a lock-out or a closure.

Confronted by such a situation recently Comrades Jyoti Basu had a meeting with the leaders of the FICCI. He told them that he wanted to know what their genuine requirements and demands were for making their industries viable. But they shoul not attempt to solve their problems just by passing on their burdens to the shoulders of the working class through retrenchment, wage cuts, increased work load, etc. The interests of the workers had to be safeguarded while taking measures necessary for making their industries profitable. Comrade Jyoti further said that if they were prepared to work out proposals that would meet the legitimate needs of industry, the working class and the country he was prepared to advise the trade unions to discuss them with the employers so that a common approach to the problem can be worked out.

Was Comrade Jyoti Basu right in making such a proposal to the employers? In my opinion he was

right.

But, are we giving any thought to the general implication of the proposal? In various degrees, the problems of industry in West Bengal exist in all other States in India. Then why do we not come out and say that the proposal should be taken into consideration by the employers, the Government and the trade unions all over India? At the moment, it will only be a propoganda slogan for mass popularisation. But, gradually under popular pressure, it will become a slogan for practical implementation.

Recently I read an advertisement given by the Kerala Government inviting capitalists from other States to start industries in Kerala. It offered innumerable facilities for such investment including

correct on the part of a Government led by the Left to do so? I think it was.

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But, in that case, it will not do to justify such a concessionary attitude just on the plea of the limited powers of the States in the Indian Constitution and the discriminatory attitude of the Central Government towards States governed by the Left. These factors are no doubt there. But what is needed is a principled explanation because even in the absence of these two factors the problem will still continue. And that principle involves our entire perspective of how we are going to restructure the Indian Industry in order to advance towards socialism.

There are two interconnected reasons why we are not going so. Firstly, according to our traditional thinking the proposals of Jyoti Basu and the Kerala Government amount to class collaboration and abandonment of the principle of class struggle, Secondly, we are not giving thought to the new reality which calls for such a generalised approach for the solution of the problems created by it.

That is where the question of Gorbachev's call for new thinking comes in. That is why his insistence that in the present day world problems have to be solved on the basis of the "balanced mutual interest" of contending social forces becomes both necessary and principled. And, that is where Gandhiji's call to the industrialists to function as the trustees of the people develops a new dimension and relevance.

I can give many such illustrations but that is not necessary for the point I am making. Considera-

tions of space are also there.

But, I will just refer to one major question. In the light of the new reality and the new thinking demanded by it, the programmes of both the CPI and the CPI-M have lost their relevance. When we are faced with a protracted process of restructuring the country involving varied and innumerable transitional measures and stages, controversy National Democracy and People's Democracy becomes unreal. The goal of socialism is undebatable. The task is to concretise the transitional measures.

Similarly, it is accepted that the present state in India is not in reality, a state of the working people (both manual and intellectual workers). It is a state of the exploiting classes of the country. Whether it is a state of the bourgeoisie as a whole compromising with the landlords, or a bourgeois-landlord state led by the big bourgeoisie, is extremely difficult to pinpoint. A precise demarcation between the two categories is hardly possible. The categories over And, in either case, the problem of the transit tion remains essentially the same. The aim of restructuring a state machine dominated by powerful vested interests in industry, trade and agriculture and making it a true political instrument of the people, in which the working class will play an effective role remains tive role, remains the same.

The task is to work out a new programme corres ponding to the new reality. If that is not done, the discussion on the conflict between the two programmes becomes mes becomes a sterile discussion. No one outside the two Parties has the slightest interest in it, and

doubtful whether it makes ig transbytery at Barren Figured attornation Talken the Cuban revolution. No one can argue that and file members of the two Parties. Practically, it becomes like the arid controversy among medieval Roman Catholic priests as to whether the devil was

I would like to formulate the question of the state in the following manner. I make a distinction between state and government which is necessary both

in theory and practice.

India is a sovereign parliamentary republic based on adult franchise. It is a bourgeois democratic

Within this framework the policies of the governstate. ment vary in accordance with the class character of the ruling party or the class composition the ruling coalition when a coalition of political parties is in

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The character of the Indian state can change in two opposite directions. It can change if a dictatorship of the reactionary class forces in India colluding with imperialism comes to power. It can change if an alliance of classes capable of giving the state policy a Leftist, socialist orientation comes to power, in which the case the entire state structure will need a radical restructuring.

In such a class combination, the working class in alliance with the peasantry and rural poor, and various middle class elements will be an effective force. The feudal forces will have no place, nor the sections of the bourgeoisie colluding imperialism. Which other elements from the bourgeoisie will be included will depend on factors and circumstances that arise in the process of the transformation. It is the persistent effort of the Communist Party to bring about such a transformation.

It is also necessary briefly to refer to the role of the working class.

There are no two opions on the question that in the transformation from capitalism to socialism the working class has to play a vanguard, guiding

But this role does not develop overnight in a cut and dried manner, nor can it be imposed on the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal, anti-monopoly, democratic forces in the country. That role develops in the course of the entire transition in the measure in which the working class, headed by the Communist

Party, fulfills its historical mission.

The revolutions after the Second World War have shown how complex, and even uneven, this process is. It would be stretching the idea too far to hold that the that the peoples' democratic Revolutions in the countries of Eastern Europe took place under the leadership of the working class in those countries. Having defeated Nazi Germany, the Soviet Red Army stood on guard against any imperialist intervention in Eastern Europe.

It was under its protection that the working class and the Communist Parties in these countries, together with various anti-fascist, democratic forces came to Power. And then, in the course of subsequent progress, the working class and the Communist Party really became the leader of the entire people in each country.

the Cuban revolution was led by its working class and the Communist Party. Fidel Castro and the revolutionary forces led by him captured power, though certainly they were helped by the Cuban working class. It was after the revolution that the two forces fused and a real, working class Communist Party was formed. Since then, of course, the Cuban working class and the Communist Party have led Cuba to socialism.

We have to recognise that in India the situation is far more difficult and complex. The first thing that stares us in the face is that the Indian working class played a far more important political role in our freedom movement than what it has done in the post-independence period. Indeed. during the last four decades, the political role of the Indian working class in national politics has declined. Its trade union movement has become far more powerful, but surely not its political role.

Perhaps, it may be argued that the fact that Communists have been in power in three States for different periods of times is proof of the advanced state of working class leadership in Indian politics. This is a big question involving various factors into which I cannot enter here. All I will say is that it would be a dangerous self-deception if such a view is really held. Some time we will have to pay dearly for the delusion.

The task before us is immense and extremely complicated. Firstly, our working class itself has to realise its historical role through innumerable struggles, not only for itself, but for various democratic causes that face the country. Then (simultaneously) the peasantry and various middle class elements have to see in the working class the most consistent fighter for their just demands.

This is how the leading role of the working class

will gradually emerge in India.

I have already explained that the completion of the democratic revolution and the transition to socialism is going to be a very protracted process involving innumerable measures and stages, in the course of which the working class has to emerge, more and more, as the guiding force of the revolutionary process.

So, whether it is National Democracy or People's Democracy, the working class is not going to become the leader overnight. In fact, as matters stand, it is but one of the partners in various democratic forces that are jointly leading our present day democratic

struggles.

This is the only correct way of understanding the development of the role of the working class in India. To argue that the CPI-M holds aloft the banner of the leading role of the working class while the CPI surrenders it to the bourgeoisie is selfrighteous scholasticism, nothing else.

XIII. A Radically New Approach: Need for a Programme of National Consensus

To begin with, what is needed is a radically new approach to the question of a programme.

we put forward in our programmatic documents, resolutions, etc. But they are formulated as Left and democratic demands for Left and democratic unity. It is here that the question of a new approach comes in, and it is important.

What is needed is a programme of national consensus, national unity. It would obviously be against all reactionary and divisive forces and oriented towards what is now generally referred to as growth with social justice. It can be termed a

patriotic programme for patriotic unity.

It is not my purpose here to draw up such a programme comprehensively and in detail. What I want to do is broadly indicate its approach and character.

-(A)

Take the question of foreign policy. The programmatic documents and resolutions of the conferences of the non-aligned movement (NAM) state very clearly and explicitly what our foreign policy should be. In fact, India has played a very prominent role in formulating the principles and policies of the NAM.

These documents spell out all foreign policy questions related to peace, peaceful coexistence, disarmament, the right of nations to self-determination, their free and friendly cooperation in mutual interest, the rejection of force or threats of force in international relations and the settlement of all disputes through negotiations, and so on.

The NAM resolutions also give a clear guidance on economic issues. Disarmament for development, equitable terms of trade between advanced and developing countries, aid on reasonable terms and without strings, the terms on which foreign capital and . technology should be made available to the developing countries so that it helps their self-reliant development and does not become an instrument of neo-colonialism, etc. All such issues are covered by the NAM resolutions. All such questions are now covered by what is called the New International Economic Order (NIEO).

Very helpful in this respect are also many resolutions of the UNO, the group of seventy seven (G-77), UNCTAD, the proposals put forward by developing countries in the North-South dialogue,

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) is naturally of very great importance to India and all countries of the Indian sub-continent, now called South Asia. Both for achieving peaceful and neighbourly relations and for common economic development, SAARC is very important. Its recent meeting in Pakistan has been particularly encouraging and promising.

Indo-Pak and India-China relations are obviously of vital importance for India in all respects. The Indo-Pak Simla Agreement and certain positions jointly accepted by India and China regarding the regulation of their mutual relations, constitute a

sound basis for further advance.

Even on the vital question of India's relations with

There is nothing basically wrongs wet by the demands undather Soviet Union and other socialist countries there are innumerable agreements, statements, declarations (and the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Co. operation) which fully explain what these relations are and how they have to develop. They cover all questions of economic, political and cultual cooper-

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The point I want to stress is that the foreign policy part of our programmatic documents should be formulated on the basis of documents, resolutions, statements, etc. jointly accepted by India and other countries. All that we want to include in India's foreign policy is fully included in these docu-

At the same time that would give our foreign policy positions the character of a national consensus, not just a Left and democratic programme.

(B)

Now as regards economic policy, the national consensus on economic problems is based on building a self-reliant, viable economy that will grow fast enough to absorb our vast unemployed population and raise the living standards of the working people in urban and rural areas. All economic policies whether in respect of industry, agriculture, credit, export-import trade, the roles of the public and the private sectors, the conditions and terms on which foreign capital and technology are to be allowed to operate in the country, fiscal policy, resource mobilisation, the infrastructure, etc., in other words, planning in general, have to subserve the aim of building a fast growing, self-reliant, viable economy that will end poverty and destitution, secure employment for the people and raise their living standards to a tolerable, decent level. Their needs of health, housing and education are obviously included.

Whatever economic policies undermine and are detrimental to this aim, have to be opposed are rejected. And that means policies dictated by the narrow, selfish aims of foreign and internal monopoly capital, big business, and the landlords.

However, these policies need to be placed not in the limited framework of the rich versus the poor but the broader framework of a national consensus. In the present terminology they have to provide for

growth with social justice.

A couple of illustrations will easily bring out the point. Privatisation and the so-called "liberalisa" (including liberalisation of the import of foreign capital and technology) not only fatten that section of industrialists for whom profiteer ing is the only purpose of running an industry, and lead to growing unemployment they have already ruined a number of industrialists who are unable to take advantage of these "concessions". They are running the self-reliance of Indian industry and subordinating it to the interersts if foreign monopoly capital. Hence they are not only antiworking class. They are anti-national.

The same applies to the question of land reforms The break up of land monopoly and distribution of land to the land land to the landless and poor peasants is naturally poverty. Remunerative needed to alleviate their

prices will improve the condition of the peasants of these measures are equally needed for increasing but these measures of which the growth of our market in the absence of which the growth of our market in the growth of our market in

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Not only that. Capitalists are diverting their capital into industries pandering to the consumerist demands of the vastly increased nouveau riche, such as cosmetics, fast foods, refrigerators, fashionable clothing, television sets, video cassettes, scooters, etc. instead producing goods needed by the common people. The absence of land reforms prevents the development of a market for the people and creates a debased market detrimental to the national interest.

In brief, the projection of the economic policies advocated by us has also to be related to national interest, a national consensus.

(C)

It is almost a fashion in India to speak of India's ancient heritage of unity in diversity. We never miss an opportunity to surmonise to other countries that together with non-violence and tolerance, unity is diversity is India's message to the rest of the world.

Meanwhile, this much vaunted unity in diversity is ablaze all over the country and barring making pious professions that they stand for the unity of the country against all divisive forces, political parties (except the communists) are doing nothing to curb, leave aside fighting the divisive forces.

In fact, the reality is even worse. All bourgeois parties, ruling and non-ruling, kowtow to communal, casteist, chauvinist, parochial, obscurantist, and similar divisive forces for the sake of electoral gains. All talk of national integration and profession of secularism has become a ritual.

Actually, what we are faced with is the stark reality that the threat of national disintegration has become the greatest danger to our national integrity, and in consequence, to national security and independence.

At the root of the threat lies the uneven development of capitalism (growing social and regional disparities) and the slow development of our economy which, far from solving the problem of unemployment, has made it a frightening monster. Such an economic development also leads to discrimination various upper echclons of society. This is the soil in and all sorts of chauvinist and disruptive forces carry solving all their problems. Such is the new magnitude of the threat to solve the discretize discretize.

of the threat to our unity in diversity.

In such a condition the solution of this problem urges and demands of the dispossessed and the left outs" may be, their problem cannot be solved

prices will improve the condition of the reasons the backward regions (nationalities) against the higher castes, but these measures are equally needed for increasing the backward regions (nationalities) against the agricultural production and creating an internal advanced regions, the tribals against the non-tribals, agriculture the absence of which the growth of our and so on.

The problem of unity in diversity (national integration) has innumerable ramifications. Here I want to refer to two important issues connected with national integration.

One is the question of Centre-State relations. On this, the official documents of the Communists are clear. We want the States to have more financial and administrative powers consistent with the responsibility and authority of the Central Government to protect national security and integrity and broadly guide the national economy.

But it is necessary to realise that while the BJP wants over centralisation of power at the Centre in its drive for a Hindu Rashtra, and the Congress-I wants the same in the name of national unity, the position of all other parties is the opposite.

All these Opposition parties have a deeply regionalist, parochial outlook. Leaving out the overtly or covertly seccessionist forces represented by certain parties based on religion or tribal identity, even the rest are very parochial.

For the Telugu Desam, the Centre is a conceptual myth. The position of the Assam Gana Parishad is not much different. The separatist trend in the DMK is strong and comes out, for instance, on the Tamil-Hindi question.

These parties should not be stigmatised as antinational, because they also reflect regional aspirations which are rejected by the Central Government in the name of national unity.

Even then, their basic outlook on the issue of national integration is parochial and harmful.

They do not even see that if the States were to be given all the financial and administrative powers they demand, it will be the advanced industrial States in India that will march forward even more rapidly and it will be the backward States (such as those in North-East India and Orissa) that will be starved of all financial resources. Without a strong democratic Centre how are the financial resources of the richer States going to be, made available for the poorer States in India? So, once again, the need of providing for a balanced, mutual interest for the advance of all States and of national economy as a whole, is unavoidable.

The next question is of safeguarding the interests of the minorities and weaker sections of society. This has innumerable aspects but I want to refer to one of them, that is, reservation in jobs and educational institutions.

Our Constitution provides for reservation for the Scheduled Castes (Harijans) and the Scheduled Tribes.

This was undoubtedly necessary for reasons that do not need explanation. But when the Constituent Assembly discussed this question, it was clearly realised that such reservation does have a deleterious result, that is, that it encourages separatist tendencies in the communities for whom reservation is provided. And so our Constitution also laid down that reservation will continue for ten years during which

which would eliminate the need of reservation.

That progress has not been brought about and the ten year period has been repeatedly extended. All this is a matter of history.

In fact, what has happened is the reverse. The scope of reservation has been constantly broadened to include other backward castes not included in the Constitution when it was framed.

We have now reached a stage where reservation in jobs and education has reached at least fifty per cent in all States, and is as high as seventy per cent in a few States.

Obviously, it is neither possible to abolish all these reservations abruptly nor to reverse the process drastically. That would be inviting an unmanageable upheaval in the country.

At the same time it will be blindness not to recognise how dangerous the entire process has become. The recent frightful vandalism of the Vanniyars in Tamil Nadu is a warning that cannot be ignored. The drift has gone so far that the Janata Dal leadership has decided that sixty per cent of the members of its party committees from the all-India to the district-level must be composed of members of the OBCs (Other Backward Castes), SCs and STs! Can there be any secularism if the committees of political parties are based on reservation for different caste

At the other end, it is also true that the question of "merit" raised against reservations is a cover for the privileged classes and castes for continuing their traditional monopoly in education, government services, industry, etc. These people never raise the question of "merit" when it is butchered by corruption and nepotism practised by those who hold economic and political power in society. And that is where "merit" is most sinned against in actual life. They raise a hue and cry about "merit" only on the issue of reservation for the weaker sections of society.

Considering all the aspects of this thorny, complicated and explosive problem, what is needed is a progressive, democratic national consensus for its solution.

Firstly, more and more, reservation has to be based on economic considerations, not on community and caste. The better off, richer strata of the backward classes, who, in fact, usurp the concessions given to their communities leaving their poor brethern out in the cold, have to be excluded from the advantage of reservation. Simultaneously, reservation has to be given to poor elements in the upper castes who need it.

Secondly, special provision has to be made for the education and training of the members of the backward classes. The aim should be that while reservation continues at the point of entry into educational institutions and employment, it is gradually eliminated in the matter of passing examinations or promotion after securing employment.

Today, the backward classes require a lesser number of marks even for passing examinations, not

socio-economic progress should belize hough Sabei Houne atchuding accome in medical colleges! At whose risk? Obviously, at the risk of the patients they will treat after they become doctors. Such things cannot continue. Such concessions in passing examinations have to end.

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In the matter of promotions also backward class employees must be given special training to equip them for higher posts. And together with such training, promotion has to be based increasingly on merit, not on caste or community.

My point is that while due account has to be taken of the social disabilities of the backward classes and concessions have to be given to them, gradually the caste basis of reservations has to be phased out, and the question of merit has to be given its due place in the interest of society as a whole.

And the basic aspect of the question must be seriously borne in mind. Caste cuts across class. Reservation based on caste necessarily engenders separatism and casteism which is extremely harmful both to the class solidarity of the oppressed strata of our society, and to the democratic, secular unity of the country as a whole.

Such should be the basic of a national consensus on the vexed issue of reservations.

In education, the three-language formula is correct. But considering the developments of the last twentyfive years, it will have to be implemented gradually with the full consent of people speaking our various languages.

(D)

Secularism is obviously a vital and indispensable part of the national consensus. But what it means in terms of concrete policy has to be clarified.

Achieving such basic aims as the formal separation of the state from religion, the separation of politics from religion, putting an end to political parties based directly or indirectly on religion, is going to be a very long process in India. We have to remembber that due to the backward social consciousness of our people, religious consciousness was used for progressive, patriotic aims in our freedom movement. Even today, not all who speak in the name of religion are communalists. That is why the separation of religion from politics needs immense mass education, a new ideological consciousness among the people. It involves a very serious social and political struggle. These aims cannot be achieved just by the enactment of laws. Even the separation of education from religion, a necessary part of secularism, can be brought about only gradually.

But there are certain things which have to be implemented firmly even in the existing circumstances

The use of places of worship (temples, mosques, urches etc.) for worship (temples, mosques, churches, etc) for political activities has been already made illegal. That law has to be implemented.

Extremely important is taking firm legal action against those who incite contempt and hatred among the fellowmen the fellowmen of one religion or caste against the

followers of another religion objectsteby AAndaactionndattions, has at Benstelpped. followed be taken whether such propaganada is done orally or in printed form. Such provocation and orally on this nothing to do with reasonable criticism of religious beliefs and practices. On the contrary, it is the debasement of religious faith for criminal, anti-social purposes.

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Freedom of religion has to be there and there must be no coercion against religious beliefs and faith. Even the preaching of one or another religion is a valid right. Simultaneously, reasonable criticism if religion and religious practices has also to be protected. But the propaganda of hatred, distrust and contempt in the name of defending religion is a totally different thing. That is not religion but the prostitution of religion. That is where communal violence originates. That is why such propaganda has to be firmly put down.

The performance of religious rites in association with state functions, must of all, ministerial func-

Downright propagation of superstition by radio and television also has to end. Even god-men and miracles performed by them are televised. That is the limit.

(E)

The problems of ecology (pollution) and the urban crisis have become formidable and threatening. Our metropolitan cities are bursting at their seams, their civic amenities are in shambles, slums have raised all manner of social problems. Scientists and experts in urban planning have made very competent and practical recommendations regarding both the problems. This is a subject on which a broad national consensus already exists. It is surprising that no political party has made these issues a part of its political programme. That is very urgently needed.

(To be continued)

M.S. Rajan: NAM

(Contd. from page 12)

absurd and illogical, because the former is opposed to the existence of these blocs. Indeed, the NAM's long term objective is to have these blocs abrogated. This desire to imitate the methods of the cold war blocs is possibly also due to the misconceived desire of some members of the NAM to seek uniformity of views and agreement on foreign policy issues among members. This is quite contrary to the policy of nonalignment which stands for relative freedom of policy and action in international affairs - not only from the hegemony of the superpowers and the blocs they head, but also between and among fellow members of the NAM. The NAM (like the United Nations) is a highly pluralistic Movement — in terms of geopolitical interests, ideological predilections, social and economic patterns of society; and it is impossible, if not absurd, to enforce on members any unformity or conformity of views on foreign policy issues.

One hopes that the forthcoming Non-aligned Summit Conference in Belgrade next September will reject the proposed distortion of priorities of procedural and methodological innovations of the Committee of Foreign Ministers, and spend some time in considering proposals for enforcement of the criteria of membership and recommendations of its earlier conferences about promoting the objectives of the Movement.

Yassin Bidar : Afghanistan

(Contd. from page 13)

Army and overestimated their own. They also failed to realise that direct Pakistani participation in the operation coupled with Pak President Ghulam Ishaque's declaration in favour of a Pak-Afghan confederation, actually heightened the Afghan's sense of nationalism and acted as a morale booster for the Afghan Army.

4. The Soviet withdrawal had helped to subside the determination of the local commanders to carry on the war which is no longer a jihad (holy war) against the foreign forces but a civil war with an Afghan Government.

5. The local commanders were dismayed at the formation comformation of the opposition consultation committee in the opposition consultation cons mittee and the interim government at Rawalpindi without at the interim government at Rawalpindi without giving them their rightful place in that set-up

6. The continuous campaign for national reconciliation by the Kabul Government, had its psychological impact on the opposition forces as they are the they are themselves getting tired of fighting and are pining for peace.

The current operations are a test for the Afghan Army, the first time they were fighting without the presence of the Soviet troops. More importantly they underline once again for all concerned that war is not the solution to the present complex situation in Afghanistan. 🛘

Jagmohan: Cultural Roots

(Contd. from page 14)

that perceives the essential oneness behind all existence.

It is this thought, again, that believes in the existence of divinity in every individual, and emphasises mutual love and respect in human relationship. And it is this thought that postulates: "See God in man; love Him; serve Him; meditate and discover Him within you and also within the society".

We should rebuild India with this thought as our solid foundation. Then alone will our institutions acquire purpose and potency. Then alone will our provisions yield the intended constitutional results.

MAINSTREAM May 13, 1989

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What, then, does the Hindu-Muslim unity consist in, and how can it be best promoted? The answer is simple. It consists in our having a common purpose, a common goal, and common sorrows. It is best promoted by cooperating in order to reach the common goal, by sharing one another's sorrows and by mutual toleration. A common goal we have. We wish this great country of ours to be greater and self-governing. We have enough sorrows to share; and today, seeing that the Muhammadans are deeply touched on the question of the Khilafat and their cause is just, nothing can be so powerful for winning Muhammadan friendship for the Hindu as to give his whole-hearted support to the claim.

MAHATMA GANDHI

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GLASNOST GLEANINGS

Caribbean Crisis: Today's Glasnost and Yesterday's Secrecy

ANDREI GROMYKO

This is an abridged version of an article by the former Soviet President and Foreign Minister. carried in Izvestia, the Soviet Government daily, on April 15, 1989. - Editor

On May 20, 1962 Nikita Khrushchev returned to Moscow from Bulgaria where he stayed on a friendly visit. I accompanied him in this trip and was returning home on the same plane.

When we had already been airborne for some-

time, Khrushchev suddenly told me:

"I'd like to talk to you tete-a-tete about one important question."

There was nobody around. I realised that he was going to discuss with me something really important. Khrushchev did not like tete-a-tete conversations on political subjects and did not hold them often. What was he going to discuss with me? I decided that he had developed or was developing some new idea which he wanted to share with a man who concerned himself with foreign affairs in his official capacity.

My guess proved to be correct. Khrushchev made

an important announcement:

"The situation which has taken shape around Cuba now is dangerous. To save it as an independent state we should deploy a number of our nuclear missiles there. Only in this way can we save it. Washington won't be stopped by failure of its last year's invasion of Playa Giron. What do you think on this score?"

He was waiting for an answer. The question was unexpected and uneasy. After thinking it over for a

while I said:

"No doubt, the Playa Giron operation was an aggressive, organised US action against Cuba. But I know the situation in the United States where I spent eight years. As you know I was also the Ambassador that if we Ambassador there. I must frankly say that if we bring our nuclear missiless to Cuba, there will be a police nuclear missiless to Library States. I'm be a Political explosion in the United States. I'm absolutely absolutely sure of this, and this should be taken into account"

I wouldn't say that Khrushchev liked my answer. also thought that he might fly into a rage on earing much that he might fly into a rage on hearing my words. But he didn't. At the same time I felt quite definitely that he wasn't going to

We kept silent for some time. Then he said sud-

We don't need a nuclear war, and we are not going to go to war."

He said this in a firm tone, and I felt that this atement had a firm tone, and I felt that this statement had been thought over in advance just as the first one been thought over in advance just as the first one. I just made a mental note that he did not express it right after the first one. But I heaved a sigh of relief as soon as I heard it. It even seemed to me that Khrushchev's tone of voice had become milder.

I maintained silence, reluctant to add anything

to what I had already said.

After a certain reflection Khruschev said in conclu-

sion of our conversation:

"I will put the question of introducing Soviet missiles to Cuba at a session of the Presidium of the CPSU Central Committee in a few days."

This is what he did before long.

I paid attention to the fact that Khrushchev expressed his ideas to me, and later on to the session of the Presidium without any trace of hesitation. I made the conclusion that he had harmonised this question in advance at least with our military leaders. I gathered from the way Soviet Minister of Defence, Marshal Malinovsky, behaved at the session that he supported Khrushchev's proposal without any reservations.

The question of deploying Soviet missiles on Cuba was tabled for discussion at the Presidium of the CPSU Central Committee, and Khrushchev's proposal was unanimously backed by the participants in the session.

Summing up, I can make the following conclu-

(1) Khrushchev did not accept any arguments against the deployment of Soviet missiles on Cuba, and believed it ought to have been carried out by all means.

(2) He thought that the Soviet Union should not and would not let the situation escalate into a

nuclear clash.

He did not voice the second idea at the session. But he did express it in his conversations with some members of the Presidium. Of course, this did not rule out the risk of the outbreak of a nuclear war since we did not know exactly the intentions of the American side.

The missiles were brought to Cuba. This action triggered off a political explosion in the United

The events that followed demonstarted that both sides did not yield to the emotions which had been running high enough. Realising their responsibility both before their nations and the world as a whole. they managed to settle the crisis peacefully. The

MAINSTREAM May 13, 1989

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played high responsibility throughout this complica-

ted and dangerous period.

Intensive efforts were taken to find common positions, and bring the views of the sides closer. The exchange of messages between Khrushchev and Kennedy was the main but not the only channel of communication.

As for my own activities in that difficult period, I'd like to mention a conversation with President John Kennedy which I conducted on behalf of the

Soviet leaders on October 18, 1962.

I initiated the discussion of the Cuban issue in this conversation, and set forth the Soviet position to the President, stressing that the unrestrained anti-Cuban campaign conducted by the US side, its attempts to block Cuba's trade with other countries, and appeals for outright aggression against that country may have grave consequences for all man-

In turn Kennedy said that the United States found unsuitable the present Cuban regime, and would

prefer a different government there.

This statement sounded sharp. I paid attention to the fact that he didn't even try to find some expressions which would assuage the impression produced by this sharply-worded attitude to the new Cuba.

So I asked him:

"But what makes the American leaders think that the Cubans should arrange their domestic affairs not as they see fit themselves, but at the discretion of the Americans? Cuba belongs to the Cuban people, and neither the United States nor any other power has the right to interfere in its domestic affairs. Any statements by the President or other officials about Cuba posing a threat to US security are without grounds. It is enough to compare the size and resources of the two countries — one of which is so big and the other so small — to see that these accusations against Cuba are obviously unfounded."

Having quoted the position of Cuba which had declared more than once that it was not going to impose its orders on anyone, that it firmly advocated the principle of non-interference in each other's internal affairs, and was striving to settle all disputable issues with the US government through nego-

tiations, I noted:

'The settlement of the overwhelming majority of international problems is a result of the talks between states.

I made it thereby clear to the US President that if the United States had any claims to Cuba or the Soviet Union they ought to be settled by peaceful means.

At the same time I declared to President Kennedy

on behalf of the Soviet Government:

'In a situation where the United States is taking hostile actions against Cuba, and also against those states which maintain good relations with it, respect its independence, and give it aid in an hour of trial, the Soviet Union won't play the role of a passive The USSR is a great power, and it won't sit idle watching a threat of a big war emerging over the Cuban issue or over the situation in any other region of the world."

Cuban leaders and personally Printed Castvo Sassej Houndarion Khenne day of entacking Cuba, and that the Soviet Red plans of attacking Cuba, and that the Soviet Union could proceed from the premise that Cuba was not exposed to any threat.

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At that point I recalled the aggressive action

against Cuba on Playa Giron.

"It is the United States which staged this action."

This is a product of its policy," I said.

The President admitted that this action was a mistake. He said he was trying to restrain the forces which advocated an invasion, and to prevent actions which might lead to war. He didn't deny that the Cuban issue had really become a serious one, and that nobody knew the outcome of these developments

The President began talking at length about the Soviet "offensive weapons" being deployed on Cuba He didn't use the word "missiles". I cannot explain why. But be it as it may, he made things easier for me - I didn't have to speak directly about missiles.

either.

There was a folder on the President's table. Inquisitive journalists maintain that it contained photos of Soviet missiles on Cuba. Some of their colleagues said in those days that the President kept the photos in his table. Both the former and the latter could be right. But throughout our conversation the President did not open the folder, nor opened his drawer. So didn't see any photos in his study. Nobody showed them to me. I didn't have a 'grudge' against my interlocuteur for that reason.

However, if the President had spoken directly about the missiles, I would have readily told him, as it had been agreed upon in Moscow: "Mr President, the Soviet Union has brought to Cuba a small They will never number of defensive missiles.

threaten anyone.'

This is what I replied to the President's statement

about Soviet "offensive weapons":

"The character of weapons — whether they are offensive or defensive - depends on the goal pursued by one's policy. Cuba doesn't have any aggres sive schemes as regards the United States. How can it have any offensive weapons in this case?"

But the President was little interested in logic. The train of this thought was quite different. he repeated what he had already said, adding that the United States could not accept the provision of Cuba with the weapons he mentioned. He said the weapons posed a threat to the United States, and that the Soviet Union ought to pull them out of Cuba.

Then the President announced an official state ment about the imposition of a blockade around Cuba.

I had to say again on behalf of the Soviet leaders! "The Soviet Union is urging the US government and the President personally not to allow any steps which would be which would be incompatible with the interests of peace and denter peace and dentente, with the principles of the UN Charter."

At the same time I explained to the President Soviet aid to Cuba is aimed exclusively at streng its defense. thening its defences and developing its civilian economy. The fact its developing its civilian economy. The fact that Soviet specialists train

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Cubans to handle weapons designed by trya designed und the restrost the example that the atmosphere here is still the qualified as a threat for anyone. The calm " Cubans to qualified as a threat for anyone. The USSR responded to Cuba's plea for aid because this USSK lessed at removing the menace overhanging

The time for summing up had come.

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Taking account of the conversation President Kennedy set forth his position on the key issues.

He said that, first, the US was not planning and would not undertake an armed invasion of Cuba. Second, he stated officially that the action on Playa Giron was a mistake. Third, he insisted on the removal of the Soviet "offensive weapons" from Cuba. Summing up, he expressed his opinion to the effect that if all these points be taken into account, the relevant questions could be settled.

In the end of the meeting I carried out one more assignment of Moscow, announcing a proposal of the Soviet leaders to hold a Soviet-American summit for settling disputable international problems, and discussing questions which evoked differences between the USSR and the US.

Although during the conversation President Kennedy made a positive response to this proposal, I was told later on the same day that in the opinion of the US side the said meeting, if it took place in November 1962, would be unprepared and was unlikely to produce positive results. So, while not rejecting the idea of a summit as such, Washington suspended it for an indefinite time.

This conversation with Kennedy on the Cuban question abounded in abrupt twists and zigzags. The President was nervous, although he tried to conceal this. He made contradictory statements. Threats against Cuba alternated with assurances that Washington did not have any aggressive intentions against that country.

But the President understood the implications which an aggression against Cuba would have. This conversation reflected the contradictory attitudes and nervous tension in the leading circles of the United States. The fact that common sense ultimately prevailed in the approach of the White House host shows that he was a man of outstanding wisdom and will even though he had lost his balance to some

Naturally enough, I reported immediately about my conversation with Kennedy in a cable to the Soviet leaders, and told Khrushchev about it in detail upon my return to Moscow.

It is worth describing Khrushchev's conduct during the Caribbean crisis in more detail.

The session of the Presidium of the CPSU Central Committee was held on a day when nobody could think about was held on a day when nobody and think about anything else than the complications and dangerous. dangerous state of relations with the United States, when ever state of relations with the United States, when every report from Washington or Havana was meticulously report from Washington or Havana was meticulously studied, when nobody could speak about anything else than the situation in the Caribbean and the result of the situation in the Caribbean and the result of the situation in the Caribbean and the result of the situation in the Caribbean and the result of the situation in the Caribbean and the result of the situation in the Caribbean and the result of the situation in the Caribbean and the result of the situation in the Caribbean and the result of the situation in the Caribbean and the result of the situation in the Caribbean and the result of the situation in the Caribbean and the result of the situation in the Caribbean and the result of the situation in the caribbean and the result of the situation in the caribbean and the result of the situation in the caribbean and the situation in the situation in the caribbean and the situation in the sit bean and the US blockade against Cuba. It was at this session US blockade against Cuba. It was at this session that Khrushchev proposed all of a

sudden:
What if the members of the Presidium went to the theatre the members of the Presidium went to the theatre this evening? Let's show our people and

At first this proposal somewhat puzzled those present. But later on, when everyone realized its meaning, it was willingly accepted.

I don't remember what play was on in the theatre that day. Hardly any member of the Presidium who attended the performance was really interested in what was going on the stage. Nobody cared a bit whether it was an opera, ballet, or drama. Everyone's thoughts were riveted to the developments in the Western Hemisphere. But all those present honestly and calmly were watching the performance, breaking into applause as enthusiastic theatre fans.

On the following day the newspapers published a report about the visit to the theatre of all members of the Presidium of the CPSU Central Committee. It played its role quite well, and its reassuring effect proved to be much stronger than that which could have been produced by thousands of most seasoned lecturers.

The subsequent steps, the exchange of messages between Khrushchev and Kennedy, the routine contacts between representatives of both powers resulted in a final agreement.

In all of their messages Khrushchev and Kennedy stressed the need for a peaceful settlement of the crisis. As is known, later on the Americans lifted their sea blockade of Cuba to the satisfaction of both

Sometimes it is written in the press that by, deciding to bring its nuclear missiles to Cuba the Soviet Union violated its promise about nondeployment of nuclear weapons there. This is an invention. The Soviet Union has never given such a promise, and, consequently, there was nothing to violate.

This is what I could say about those days from

the positions of today's glasnost.

At the same time I cannot agree with those who say that during the crisis period the transportation of Soviet missiles and their deployment on Cuba was shrouded in a too thick veil of secrecy. Moreover, in some comments, this secrecy is criticised. and even enthusiastically.

But there are hardly many simpletons who would believe in real earnest that Moscow had to inform Washington about its decision to meet halfway the request of the Cuban leaders and deploy Soviet missiles on its territory for its defence.

Such pronouncements are pointless. They were not made during the period under review even by Washington. The reason is simple - Washington had never acted in a different way under similar circumstances. This applies, among other things, to the deployment of American nuclear weapons on foreign territory.

Here are some examples.

Did the United States tell the Soviet Union about its efforts to develop an atomic bomb, even in the final stage? All developments in this field were topsecret. Harry Truman advised Stalin about their results only at the Potsdam conference of the three allies.

I remember that moment very well. This hap-

pened on the eight day of the Protectary Account the first country to understand the implications was Immediately after the end of the plenary session Truman rose from his seat and approached Stalin. He also rose from his seat, making for the exist. Pavlov, the interpeter of our delegation, was standing next to him. I was also standing nearby together with some other participants in the session.

Truman asked Pavlov to translate what he was

Stalin stopped and turned to Truman. I noticed Churchill also stopping for a moment several steps

away from Truman.

Truman said he wished to make a confidential statement, and announced that the United States had developed a new weapon of tremendous destructive power.

Stalin listened to the Russian version of the statement, realised what weapon was meant, and

"Thank you for this information".

Truman did not move for same time, apparently waiting for more response, but in vain. Stalin calmly walked out of the hall. Truman had a puzzled look on his face. He turned around and also walked away, but in a direction opposite to Stalin - notably, to the doors behind which the working premises of the US delegation were

I want to draw your attention to the fact that this happened after the US had already made the Bomb and were going to commit the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki to the atomic flames.

Furthermore, did the United States build hundreds of overseas military bases with the knowledge of the Soviet Union? Or take the appearance of American nuclear weapons in South Korea. It is stuffed with these weapons, and their deployment was launched secretly. There were no attempts whatsoever to inform the USSR about such actions in advance. Meanwhile, they were taking place quite near the Soviet frontiers.

All these facts suggest the following conclusion: the questions of both covert and overt actions by the two powers, whether they concerned their security or not, could be considered and settled only on the basis of reciprocity the idea of which was

completely foreign to the United States.

The question is what remains of the argument about the Soviet Union allegedly disturbing the United States by secretly bringing it missiles to Cuba, and telling nothing to the US Administration about this action in advance?

As for the threat of a nuclear clash between the two powers, which existed at that time, Khrushchev's position was expressed in the words cited above. This position was shared by all leaders of the country. Needless to say, this does not imply that there was no risk of a nuclear clash. There was such a risk for we did not know the American position on this score. Khruschev was bound to take this fact into consideration. When it comes to the risk of a nuclear clash, it is considered too high even if the odds are one to a thousand.

When analysed in retrospect, the question of secrecy has one more aspect, which is probably even

the first country to understand the implications of the use of nuclear weapons when they had only existed in the minds of scientists. Before Manhattan Project appeared and before nuclear weapons transgres. sed the stage of ideas which were as fantastic as they were horrible, Albert Einstein warned the then US President on behalf of the scientific community about the threatening consequences which the results of the fission of the atomic nucleus might have for mankind, if they were used for the manufacture of weapons of mass destruction.

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I remember well my meeting with Albert Einstein in New York City soon after the entire world had heard the words "Hiroshima" and "Nagasaki" The great scientist told me that he had warned President Roosevelt that the atomic bomb might spell missortune for people.

I was also impressed by his another tell-tale pronouncement. He said that had he known that Hitler would not have had an atomic bomb, he would not have backed the American atomic project.

Having such convincing scientific arguments. couldn't the US Administration raise before its allies, the Soviet Union included, the question of using nuclear energy exclusively for peaceful purposes, and banning all efforts, including tests, towards the manufacture of nuclear arms?

By that time the allies had already broken the backbone of the Nazi army. Consequently, Germany and Japan, for that matter, had already lost the

However, atomic energy was not used for the cause of peace immediately after its discovery. A chance for what might have been a great feat in history, had the the allies acted in the spirit of unity and solidarity, was missed.

The Soviet Union, its leaders, first and foremost Mikhail Gorbachev declare openly and honestly today, too, that the only reliable way of removing the threat of nuclear war and ensuring peace on Earth lies through the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, and guarantees of the use of nuclear energy exclusively for peaceful purposes. In a nul-shell, it is necessary to energetically pursue the policy course which was embodied in the conclusion of the INF Treaty between the Soviet Union and the United States.

Sumit: Sino-Soviet Summit

(Contd. from page 4)

the normalisation of ties between the two based on a realistic appraisal of identity of views and divergences of opinion gences of opinion would help to place their bilateral relations on a sounder footing and assist the cause of a general improvement of the world environment by melting ment by making peace and security in the Asia. Pacific region more durable than before.

This indeed is the perspective before Gorbacher d Deng Yicania and Deng Xiaoping when the historic Sino-Soviet summit takes place. summit takes place in Beijing earty next week.

(May 9)

(May 9)

CULTURE

A Ballad of Love

VINOO HORA

The earliest Pahari miniatures of the Ragamala group of paintings belong to the last quarter of the seventeenth century and are among the greatest Indian paintings. Ragamala, or the 'garland of music', is a unique phenomenon in Indian painting. It is a synthesis of music, poetry and painting. Each painting is based on a raga; it depicts the moods, seasons and times of singing which came to be associated with each raga, at the same time portraying the pursuits of the Kshatriya princes of that time such as their involvement with women, wine, hunting, gambling, religious ceremonies and constant feuds with their neighbouring kingdoms. There are in all thirty six ragamala folios.

It is while browsing through M.S. Randhawa's book on Ragamala Miniature Paintings of the Kangra valley that "I was drawn into a world of beauty, lyrical romanticism and serenity of the Medieval Age. My enchantment with the Ragamala theme was complete," says Usha Venkateswaran. Ragamala paintings were a synthesis of music, poetry and painting then what better way to popularise it than with the help of Natya-cum-Nritya Shastra? Usha spoke to Malti Gilani about her idea of doing a ballet based on the Ragamala paintings of Kangra. Her enthusiasm was infectious and so the idea began to take concrete form. A year of hard labour and research crystallised into Shantipriya, a ballad of love. About forty miniatures were selected for this dance drama on the basis of their beauty, content and the raga which they depict. "A story has been woven around the selected miniatures to highlight the theme of non-violence and love, to bring out the true lyrical quality of their paintings" (Usha Venkateswaran)

Thus it was that the Ragamala paintings of Kangra came to life in the Kamani Auditorium on the evening of May 5, 1989. The show was ably sponsored by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations and was graced by Aruna Asaf Ali who inaugurated it.

Shantipriya, a fairy tale romance, is about a young and noble prince Shanti Vardhan and a temple, it is love at first sight; but their idyll is broken bugle calling all soldiers to arms. War is on. The prince recalls his duty towards his motherland and sick princess. The prince returns, disguises himself joy in music creates a spiritual bond between the two; she has been unfaithful to the prince. The lovers again meet at the temple and the prince reveals

his true identity, the prince succeeds in bringing peace and amity into the warring states. The lovers are united in matrimony. An appropriate ending to a fairy tale.

The story is interlaced with festive and seasonal dances based on ragas. For instance, Rag Megha was beautifully portrayed: the dark clouds chasing one another, the downpour and lightning were pictorial indeed. Two more scenes, though short, left an impression on the mind: a scene where the princess and her friends are bathing and another where the boatmen are ferrying their passengers across the river. Light music and simple actions; yet so rhythmic that make the audience want to move in unison with the dancers.

Act V, in particular, where the princess receives guidance from prince Shanti Vardhan and where their joy in music makes even the sur dance in joy uplifts the audience and makes the pulse beat in rhythm with the ragas — Rag Bhairav, Lalith, Bilawal and Bhatiyar. Was there a dancer in the audience whose foot did not tap along with the steps of the dancers?

The harvest dance was typically folk, joyous; the dancers wearing white robes with saffron and gold borders. The dresses on the whole were gorgeous: a splash of colour with the use of bandhni, Kulu Pattu borders and voiles. But instead of bedecking the dancers with jewellery, flowers in the hair, neck and around the wrists would have been more pleasant and typical of village folk.

As a matter of fact, in almost all scenes the actors/dancers were so bedecked with ornaments as to give them an artificial, stiff look. One could barely make out their expressions, their abhinaya bhavs. In any case, the scenes were too short and abrupt for the characters to build up emotions and put them across to the audience.

The lighting effect too left much to be desired. The paintings in the background were, at times, barely discernible and were removed much too soon for the audience to comprehend its theme.

However, these are merely some of the corners that need to be smoothened out and, as Usha Venkateswaran herself acknowledges, this production is an "experimental journey through different art forms — dance, music, poetry and painting". It does foretell of many more pleasure-filled evenings for lovers of art, music and dance. Natyalakshna has taken its first step towards interaction between artistes from different disciplines. This was merely an introduction. No doubt there is more to come.

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



Accrediting the Power-broker

THE Budget session of Parliament has ended with a bang, reaching its dramatic climax on the very last working day.

It is symbolic of the Rajiv establishment that along with the tubthumping demagogy that accompanied the introduction of the Constitutional amendment meant to usher in the panchayati raj came the Government's dilatoriness to present the report of the Comptroller and Auditor General which is reported to have passed strictures on the Government for the Bofors kickback. By sheer force of its majority in the Lok Sabha — a majority secured under an abnormal mandate — the Rajiv Government unashamedly held back the CAG report as it knew that this would have exposed once again its abettment in the kickback scandal. In other words, the image of the messiah delivering the panchayati raj was desperately sought to be saved from being disgraced by one more exposure of the Bofors scandal.

And to crown it all, the Prime Minister exposed his unbalanced temper as he repeatedly called a Member of Parliament a liar — a patently parliamentary offence unworthy of one holding the office of the leader of Lok Sabha, a conduct unthinkable under any of his predecessors in office, including his mother and grandfather. At any other time, any Speaker would not have permitted such misconduct. But Balram Jhakar, already bent down under the weight of the fodder scandal, failed pathetically to pull up Rajiv Gandhi as he certainly deserved to be corrected. In the bargain the standing of the Parliament itself was brought several metres down.

However much Rajiv and his cronies might shout, the Panchayati Bill is patently an election gimmick and it is acknowledged as such by friends and critics alike of the Congress-I. The high pitched campaign over it is expected to gear up the Congress-I party — so long beset with its sagging morale — for unleashing its poll campaign with a catchy slogan and at the same time for mounting a no-holds-barred offensive against the Opposition particularly the Janata Dal. A senior Minister of fairly long standing confided to the present writer: "So long we were on the defensive, feebly trying to ward off the Opposition charge of corruption. Now, we can go out on the offensive with at least a tangible promise to the voter."

Realists within the Congress-I do not expect their party to make much headway with the new slogan of panchayati raj in States where the parties of the Opposition have a strong well-knit base — such as the Tamil Nadu under DMK, West Bengal and Kerala under the Left, Andhra Pradesh under NTR, Karnataka and Haryana under the Janata Dal, because in these States the bluff of the panchayati raj will not work as these parties already run their own network of Organisation at the States level well is only in the Hindi heartland

that the Congress-I is calculating to make a headway large scale all over the countryside. It will no longer with this new slogan of panchayati raj as it thinks be booth capturing but turning many of the panchayati raj as it thinks be booth capturing but turning many of the panchayati raj as it thinks be booth capturing but turning many of the panchayati raj as it thinks be booth capturing but turning many of the local towards. organisation, would not be able to exploit the slogan of the panchayati raj and thereby combat the Con-

gress-I campaign.

Apart from the Opposition onslaught, Rajiv Gandhi is concerned with the problem of shifting loyalties within his own party. With the new slogan of the panchayati raj, the Congress-I strategists expect that the regional bosses within the party would have no option but to support the new line as they might find it very difficult to stay away from the campaign for the panchayati raj. The calculation in the Rajiv camp is that a brisk propaganda for panchayati raj will force the recalcitrant provincial bosses to fall in line with the Centre. In short, this slogan of panchayati raj is meant not only to help in the poll campaign against the Opposition but also to reinforce Rajiv's personal standing vis-a-vis the provincial bosses and to avert their going over to the Opposition - a prospect which can hardly be dismissed.

The ballyhoo that this new Bill on panchayati raj will eliminate power-brokers at the village level is a totally unwarranted claim. Given the present balance of forces in the countryside, particularly in the Gangetic basin, there is no question that most of the panchayats in this region will be captured by the powerful landed gentry-cum-moneylender-cum-the gun-toting anti-social elements. What happened during the recent municipal elections in UP - where the local goonda with the gun at some places chased away all the prospective candidates and himself got elected unopposed - is bound to be repeated on a

yats into pocket boroughs of the local tough by the overwhelming number of cases, these have emerged as the musclemen of the Congress-I So instead of eliminating the power broker, Rajiv's new measure will virtually hand over the power-of-attor ney to the local power-brokers, thereby making a mockery of grassroots democracy. The Congresspropaganda barrage is raised to such a high pitch that any such criticism of the Bill is promptly distorted and such critics are denounced as opponents of the very concept of the panchayati raj. And in this game Doordarshan seems to be one step ahead, as it has virtually ceased to care for the facts of any case and has blatantly reduced itself into Rajiv-darshan,

An extraordinary anomaly is being foisted upon the power-structure by this panchayat measure. The Centre-States relations have not yet been settled even after the submission of the Sarkaria Report. This is due entirely to the dragging of feet by the Rajiv Government. Instead of first settling the Centre-State question, Rajiv Gandhi has pushed this new Bill to create misunderstanding between the State Governments and the panchayats. This amounts to accentuating the inner tension within the present

constitutional system itself.

In the weeks and months to come all these issues will come up as the nation is bound to discuss furiously this new measure being pushed through by the Prime Minister himself. But who can stop Rajiv Gandhi from rushing in where wise people fear to tread?

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May 17

Rajiv's Panchayat: A Bonapartist Vision

RAJNI KOTHARI

WE are these days being fed to yet another feast of ideas and recipes for our future which looks like being even more tantalising and mind-boggling than the great technological leap into the 21st century that was laid out before us by our young and ebullient Prime Minister when he came on board in the Orwellian year of 1984.

So many unkind critics of the PM and his band of bright and bustling 'boys' had said that the technological vision was going to benefit only the rich and resourceful and that the poor and the powerless living in rural areas, even if they were to believe in the Rajiv Gandhi mystique of removing poverty through high-tech, may have to wait for too long. There were also the various middlemen - all those power brokers - who did not allow all the miracles of the technological dream to reach the poor and the needy. Even the large and generous grants announced instantly by the PM whenever he visted a drought or epidemic affected area somehow didn't produce the expected miracles. The bureaucratic machine

was either too inert or too corrupt. Another way had to be found.

This was partly provided by the second major thrust of Rajiv Gandhi and his key advisors. This was the package of policies under the general rubic of liberalisation and privatisation which were mean to relax the hold of the State and mobilise the competitive spirit and the innate inventiveness and "creativity" formal inventiveness and "large tivity" found in the private sector as also the large repertoire of ideas and commitments found in the voluntary bodies and the NGOs which provided the new service sector — it was "service to the people"

All this generated a lot of activity (both national d international) and international) as shown both on the stock market and through a superior and through a s and through a sumptuous diet of specialised conferences and worksh rences and workshops and televised shows, a fresh spurt of committees and progress reports put out by so many well-known activists on ecology, the informal sector "years and of mal sector, "women and development" and of course, to crown it all course, to crown it all, the phenomenal outburst of sheer energy generated the phenomenal outburst of sheer energy generated by that missionary wizard

pitroda and his umpteen technology yn soie its under the latest panelavats. Third and such schemes to the village Sam Philos was difficult to remember the latest count.

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AND now, on top of all this, we are witness to yet And major and all-pervading initiative of the Prime Minister which is being broadcast with great fanfare and not a little passion and conviction on his own part. This is the announcement that as the own part.
constitutional edifice of a federal system of government was unable to provide good and 'clean' administration, especially at the state level, it has been decided to decentralise the whole framework of government — to hand over power and major schemes and resources to the village panchayats and, in order to implement this 'revolution', to amend the Constitution which will put the panchayats under the direct care of the Centre. It is a Bonapartist vision of democracy in which "no one can stand in the way of me serving my people".

Day in and day out Rajiv Gandhi has been hammering on this latest brainchild of his and he appears to be in a great hurry to do this, come what may. It is nothing short of "power to the people" through village panchayats to whom the Centre will directly devolve various schemes, with the cooperation of the States where forthcoming and over their heads if need be (as may become necessary where Opposition parties were in power). It is power to the people whose welfare and well-being will become the direct responsibility of the Central leader-

ship inspired by Rajiv Gandhi.

It all sounds too funny for words. Surely, it can't be all as simple as the official media are laying it out. We need to ask: Why this sudden euphoria on the part of Rajiv Gandhi about handing power over to village panchayats over the heads of all intermediate bodies? Coming from someone who had till recently looked down upon representative bodies of all kinds, indeed all mechanisms of power and decision-making that were not handled by technocrats, and had equally looked down upon ill-bred politicians and uneducated ruralists (as people steeped in superstition and tradition), it all sounds as not just downright hypocritical, or simply amusing and comic to watch (cartoonists have had a field day on this), but as samething behind which there might be some be some cleverly camouflaged game plan. For, it is also being asked, why suddenly now after all these very

these years in office, why this particular timing? Instead of beating around the bush, let me come straight to what I believe is going on. To me it is quite clear that it is a newly thought out election strategy that it is a newly thought out election strategy that is expected to yield results, perhaps better than all is expected to yield results, perhaps better than either the 'Hindu card', the 'destabilisation card', the pack of tion card, or any other drawn from the pack of cards that card of any other drawn from the pack of cards that first Indira and then Rajiv had found handy. What is more, it falls in the populist mould that worked is more, it falls in the populist mould that worked under the mother and which is what the Congress stalwarts who have been brought back have been advising. Over and above "Garibi Hatao" of Indira "Luciana". of Indira there is the Jawahar Rojgaar Yojna to which is now added Rajiv's own 'revolutionary's

panchayats. Third, as an organisational device, it beats all others as a vote-getting mechanism, especially as the earlier type of party organisation has been disbanded, as the new boss structure that has emerged under the mafia model cannot be relied on, and as there is need for direct recruits, receiving direct doles from the very centre of the system in return for assured votes. What is proposed is a veritable shopping expedition, this time shopping for

This is of course quite a different conception from thinking of panchayats as integral units of the nation's institutional complex that had to be equipped and empowered to perform new roles. Nor is there any thought given to the concerns and anxieties that used to be raised in progressive circles and generally in New Delhi (of panchayats being 'stagnant pools' dominated by landed castes and vested interests). Perhaps the new thinking would be that it is just as well that this be so; it will make it easier to organise 'doles for votes'.

NEEDLESS to say, this latest advocacy for panchayats has little to do with any genuine desire for decentralising the Indian State and thereby involving the people in the framework of governance. This is not difficult to see. In this country we have by now had a long history of both experience and expertise on panchayati raj and democratic decentralisation. We know enough by now to say that without a multitier system of panchayati raj, itself to be considered as an extension of the federal principle and as an essential sub-structure of constituent states enjoying general autonomy and the ability to mount initiatives that are sensitive to diverse situations, mere transfers to local bodies, be they panchayats or cooperatives or community development agencies, will of necessity become rotten boroughs in the hands of corrupt politicians. There can be no generalised scheme for panchayats all over the country as is being proposed; they have to be considered as organic units of local communities, each with a distinctive set of needs and potentialities. To ignore this is to deliberately slip into the colonial model of uniform budgetary controls and either bureaucratic or party manipulations from above, or even personalised fiats exercised through purse strings, precisely the things on which committed exponents of democratic decentralisation have fought all these years.

As far as Rajiv Gandhi's scheme of 'revolutionary restructuring' is concerned, the conclusion is inescapable: it is putting into orbit a new structure which the ruling party at the Centre will be in direct contact with, keeping the States informed on certain matters but without conceding any direct control by them, and in effect creating a spoils system that becomes directly available to the Congress Party. In fact, this is categorically provided for in the proposed constitutional amendment which not only brings the panchayats under direct control of the Centre in return for the Centre entrusting them with so much power and finances but also empowers

MAINSTRHAM May 20, 1989

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controlled by Opposition parties.

Other attempts have been made in the recent past of establishing direct links between the Centre and the "grassroots". It began towards the end of Indira Gandhi's period but was picked up by Rajiv Gandhi some years later, after it became clear that the computer model of governance was not making it. There took place a series of conferences of district magistrates and collectors (from which State governments were systematically kept out) in which it was made clear that the Collector was to be once again made the king-pin of the development process. Since then, following a lot of criticism but also realising that the IAS cadre cannot be relied upon for the purpose of 'doles for votes' for the Congress, what has now been decided upon is to make the whole gambit on decentralisation on which Rajiv has staked so much serve the purpose of a new party machine, directly under the tutelage of the PM and his

It is an attempt at institutionalising corruption all the way down. Hence the close coupling of it with the Jawahar Rojgaar Yojna which is to be implemented through the panchayats and for which Rs 2,100 crores have already been allocated, as also with the lowering of the voting age which will provide young recruits for not just jobs that are coming but for the basic job of winning the election for the Congress Party — 'doles for votes'.

It is a two-pronged strategy: discredit the Opposition for its proven inability to provide a stable government and present the Congress as not only a source

the Centre to 'dissolve' recalcitrant panchayats of stability but also at the same time as a source of It is clear that this is intended for panchayats profit and much centre. In a period of declining faith in parties in general, and one in which corruption as a way of life is not any longer frowned upon, this may well work. That at any rate is Rajiv's calcula-

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This will also fit very well with the ideology of privatisation through which the private and public sectors are gradually being merged in the new dispensation. Several steps have already been taken; private takeovers extend not just to rural land masses and forests and other commons that once belonged to the community but to the public domain and the institutions of the state as well. This will now include panchayats. With the retreat of the Indian State as a public domain that was accountable to the people through a framework of public law, and with the growing private controls over the running of the Congress Party, the very idea of constitutional government will soon cease to define the rules within which power is to be wielded. The process began long back with Indira Gandhi and Sanjay: of treating the public arena as private estate. But there were a lot of pretences of a statist and 'socialist' kind and the basic understanding of politics was still public in nature. Under Rajiv Gandhi the pretences are being given up and the understanding of politics is increasingly private in nature. Treating the village panchayats as private domains of approved individuals and making them do the PM's and his party's biddings are part of this privatised view of the state and of power. Power to the panchayats means power to the highest bidder, the one with the largest doles to offer.

Panchayat Bill

A Romantic View of Village Leadership

BUNKER ROY

ONE fact clearly emerges from this Panchayat Bill: that the people who gave it shape and content have no clue of rural realities.

I cannot help but wonder who is advising the Prime Minister on these critical issues or can it be true after all that we have a gullible leader with a death wish? I cannot accept the interpretation that this is only an exercise in one-upmanship. Political mileage is all very well. There are more ways, more sensible, common-sensical and practical ways for the Congress-I as a party showing their concern for reaching funds directly to the rural poor than by destroying a village institution once and for all.

I am all for an amendment of the Constitution if it ensures gram panchayat elections regularly. But the amendment needs to contain elements that make the gram panchayat a better and more responsive, forum to the needs of the poor: a more balanced and mature institution that brings in clean, decent and practical leaders from among Scheduled Castes

ane Scheduled Tribes, from among women and youth and backward classes: an institution that is account able to the community not to the government. This is our last chance. Even the best of optimists and closest of sycophants do not predict a victory in the next election with such a massive majority so if the Panchayat Bill in its present form is passed it will be the death of village democracy.

Let us examine what the Panchayat Bill does not contain which makes it so harmful and dangerous It is all very romantic to say Power to the People and make it into and make it into a catchy slogan but the Bill must specify WHICH PEOPLE? An Eligibility factor has to be introduced. Who can be a sarpanch and qualify to stand for election? Surely the Government is not throwing is not throwing gram panchayat elections open to everyone. Rapists, murderers with known police records, cheats, embezzlers and religious fanatics and the seum of villers the seum of village society who have exploited the poorer sections of the rural areas are eligible to stand

for gram have been shouting from the rooftops that leaders and to do away with power brokers and cleanse they want to do away anti-social elements. they want of all its anti-social elements and yet this public life of all its anti-social elements and yet this public indamental and vital clause is missing from the Bill.

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This does not say much of our Chief Ministers: not one of them mentioned it in the public debate when they came to Delhi. All of them were looking at it from their own limited political and selfish standpoint when they should have put themselves in the place of the people, looked at the Bill from the other side of the table and unanimously pressurised the Government to include the 'eligibility' clause. This would at least minimise the possibility of goondas taking over the gram panchayats — as they have over the last four decades. Here is one opportunity of giving the rural poor a real chance, of allowing alternative leadership to grow from among people who are not known and habitual criminals with police records. This Bill is playing into the hands of the very anti-social elements this Government claims that it wants to avoid.

The Eligibility clause must also specify the number of times a person can be elected sarpanch member. It should not be more than three to four consecutive times and only after a gap the person should be eligible once again. This is to ensure that the potential for leadership is not stifled at the village level. It will raise hopes and galvanise the vulnerable groups to participate in the election process because this gap could provide an opportunity for SC/STs and Other Backward Classes to stand for election and win with out opposition. There should in fact be a Constitufulional provision making it mandatory for a candidate from the SC/ST or Other Backward Class (OBCs) to be elected from a gram panchayat where the percentage of SC/STs or OBCs total more than 40 per cent. This is not to say that the SC/STs have leaders who do not exploit their own class but there are many who would not be eligible if persons with police records or convictions are disqualified.

If it is a community of three or four villages of a gram panchayat that elects their sarpanch and members, then this very community should have the power to dismiss the leaders they elect—not the district collector or even the Governor. It makes no sense to give the community the power to hire but not to fire. Under Special Provision for Dissolution of Panchavat (242 Park) peeds to be chayat (243E(1)) the Right to Recall needs to be included To included. If need be the Governor must facilitate this process. If two-thirds of the voters in a gram panchayat send a representation to the Governor in writing that they have lost confidence in the Sarpanch Covernor sarpanch or any of its members then the Governor must facility any of its members then the Governor must facilitate the process of holding a Referendum within a specific the process of holding a Referendum within a specified period. If two-thirds of the registered voters ed voters on that day (with not less than 75 per cent polling account day (with not less than 75 per cent polling according to the list of voters) indicate they have lost have lost confidence in their village leaders, the sarpanch should be dismissed and fresh elections held. There could be dismissed and fresh elections held. There should be no right to appeal. This clause alone will should be no right to appeal. alone will scare the hell out of all the sarpanches and keep them in line. It is guaranteed to minimise

for gram panchayat elections under this April Samo Equindation Cherton and its appropriately because the leaders are be fair to the sarpanch there should be only four to five grounds on which dismissal is possible and representations from the community will be entertained: (i) embezzlement—with documentary evidence available and established beyond reasonable doubt; (ii) rape; (iii) murder; (iv) untouchability and a case registered under the Protection of Civil Rights Act thus providing adequate protection to the SC/STs and OBCS; (v) keeping bonded labour; and (vi) land encroachment.

> It should be mandatory under the Bill for the voters list to be displayed on a public notice board in the panchayat office. This list should be updated every year and available for everyone to see.

> The list of the poorest of the poor in every gram panchayat should also be displayed on the notice board. It will enable the community to respond and protest if the list is faulty - another community check on their leaders.

> Such checks and balances are indeed very necessary if the Government is sincere about village democracy. There is no reason why the Government should object to these suggestions since they have been made with the interest of the community in mind — not the sarpanches and how to keep them in power indefinitely.

> It is sadly evident that this Government thinks the sarpanch is a paragon of virtue and he is more sinned against than sinning. But there is no need for Government to crawl on their knees to make them and keep them happy by conceding to all their demands. It is the Government's responsibility to look after the welfare and interests of the poor first and by introducing this farcical Bill is hardly the way any confidence will be generated.

> The difference between a politician and a statesman is that the former thinks of the next election while the latter thinks of the next generation.

> Come let us see if Rajiv Gandhi can show some statesmanship.

> > Next Week

Mainstream

will be a special number marking the twenty-fifth death anniversary of Jawaharlal Nehru

I, Draupadi

KARTIKEYA SARABHAI

KARTIKEYA Sarabhai is the son of the great figure in contemporary science in our country, Vikram Sarabhai. Kartikeya is himself a young scientist, committed to the study of the problem of environment. Last year, he had gone to witness the performance of the Mahabharata at Avignon in France produced by Peter Brooks. This production was a unique experiment with a caste drawn from many countries, and the only Indian in it was Kartikeya's sister, Mallika Sarabhai, who played the role of Draupadi.

After seeing the Mahabharata at Avignon, the very same evening Kartikeya sat down to write a poem representing the thoughts of Draupadi; and offered it to his sister. It was written in

Gujarati but later translated into English by Mallika and their mother Mrinalini.

The significance of this poem, written spontaneously by a young Indian, a scientist by profession but no iconoclast of Hinduism, needs to be underlined. Here is the instant response of a good Indian citizen to the hideous inequity that women had to bear in the past and which Draupadi symbolised.

So, when we glorify the Mahabharata, let us not gloss over this aspect of the epic too - the

depiction of values which are unacceptable in the world of today.

Our rich heritage — yes, but not blind adherence to the past.

-N.C.

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The swayamvara was mine
The decision, my father's.
No garland was worn, the garland
was me.
The prize myself, for the winner of
the tournament
Not mine the decision, whom to
marry
My heart was pledged to a bow and
arrow
My life an offering to the shooter of
the fish.

All rights belong to husbands, so says society
But to be shared by five, a commodity in the market place?
Unknowingly Ma Kunti spoke, husband became husbands
In this the Pandava's Kingdom of Dharma
All this I accepted, became the wife of five
To each gave a son
Yet was the only wife of none.

Gambling they went, invited by Duryodhana
Lost all they had, losing even themselves

I unspared, was dragged into that court of men Which were these bonds of Dharma That tied my husbands? What kind of husbands these, that are tied by the Dharma of lies?

I asked, "What of me",
Bhishma said "Power is Truth,
Dharma darkness"
Robed limitlessly I was saved by
God,
The Kauravas stopped, exhausted,
still not understanding
Yes Krishna gave me cloth, but
where was the Gita's Truth?
Was Arjuna not already in need of
that counsel then?

Years went by, our lives we lived together
Started on our journey's end towards the snow-clad Himalaya I fell first, no Pandava stretched a hand.
Towards paradise they walked, not one stayed by my side.
Then, I realised heaven too must be only for men
Better then, to rest in the warm embrace of this snow.

Role of Religion in a Secular State

Political Perspectives

M.V. KAMATH

THE American College Dictionary defines the word 'secular' as follows:

1. Of or pertaining to the world or to things not religious, sacred or spiritual; temporal; worldly. 2. Not pertaining to or connected with religion,

as literature, music, etc.

3. Dealing with non-religious subjects or, especially excluding religious instruction, as educa-

tion, etc.

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4. (Of members of the clergy) not belonging to a religioussorder and the word 'secularism" is defined as "a syltem of political or social philosophy which rejects al forms of religious faith and worship and the view that public education and other matters of civil policy should be conducted without the intro-

duction of a religious element".

It is customary to call India a secular, democratic state. What does that mean? The rights of the citizens are protected under the Fundamental Rights of our Constitution. Part III and Part IV (Articles 12 to 51) elaborate these rights. It is clearly laid down, for instance, that the State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth or any of them. Again it is laid down that "no citizens shall, on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them be subject to disability, liability, restriction or condition with regard to access b) shops, public restaurants, etc. etc." The State guarantees equality of opportunity in matters of public employment and no citizen can be discriminated against on grounds of religion etc.

Article 19 assures freedom of speech and expression peaceable assembly, the rights to move freely throughout the territory of India, to reside and settle anywhere, to acquire and hold property and to practice

any profession.

Article 25 guarantees freedom of conscience and free profession and propagation of religion—subject to public order.

Article 26 guarantees freedom to manage one's religious afiairs.

In other words under our Constitution no religion or faith need live in fear of persecution. Every citizen has the same vote. Discrimination is unheard of. That is both the beauty and strength of India.

It may be worth our while to take an overview of

This contribution from the distinguished journalist is taken from his address delivered at the Manager of the Mangalore University under the auspices of the Chair for University under the auspices of the Chair for Christianity, Diocese of Mangalore.

the situation the world over. In his seminal work A General Theory of Secularisation, David Martin makes certain observations about categorising pat-

terns of secularism. They are:

1. The American Pattern: This involves a dislodgment of the relation between an aristocratic political establishment and religious establishment. Secularisation when it occurs, is largely related to ethos rather than to institutions and beliefs. Religion as such is unproblematic and non-political, though, of course, different denominations tend to support one party rather than another and raise issues as between themselves, for example, nativist Protestants against

Catholic immigrants.

2. The British Pattern: This involves a partial dislodgment of the politico-religious establishment by substantial dissent. Religion as such is politically unproblematic, except that the King of England has to belong to the Church of England and to uphold the Establishment Church. It would be unthinkable for the British sovereign to marry a Catholic, a Jew or even a member of the Greek Orthodox Church. There is no outstanding instance of the Church actively interfering with day-to-day law-making though Lords Spiritual may be members of the House of Lords.

3. The French Pattern: In France it may be said that coherent and massive secularism confronts coherent and massive religiosity and to the extent that secularism is successful there is a partial tendency to erode institutional adherence and beliefs altogether. One ethos confronts an alternate ethos. particularly when an elite culture of the secular englightenment acquires a mass 'component and achieves a historicised ideology that is. Marxism.

4. The South American Patiern: This, in essence, is an extended Latin Pattern. South American Pattern developed at a time when the European Centre of Catholicism shifted from the Right to the Centre. This provided an opportunity to limit the vicious circle of the Latin Pattern and might produce a substantial Catholic Left ameliorating the

secularist militancy of the Left as a whole.

5. The Soviet Pattern: This, according to Martin. involves a simple inversion of the Caesero-Papist conjunction by substituting a Marxist counterorthodoxy. Religion is officially privatised and both beliefs and institutions are subjected to massive attack and massive erosion. However, the internal ethos of the religious institution is not substantially diminished.

6. The Calvinist Pattern: This involves a liberalisation and partial secularisation of ethos within

the mainstream of the culture.

7. The Lutheran Pattern: Here there is a liberali-

exclusively restricted to the elite. The elite becomes open to a historicised enlightenment but perhaps more in relation to nationalism than to Marxism.

Martin summarises these patterns as follows:

1. Anglo-Saxon: Institutional erosion, erosion of religious ethos, maintenance of amorphous religious beliefs.

2. American: Institutional expansion, erosion of religious ethos, maintenance of amorphous reli-

gious beliefs.

3. French or Latin: Massive religious beliefs, ethos and institutions, confronting massive secu-

larist beliefs, ethos and institutions.

4. Russian: Massive erosion of religious beliefs, ethos and institutions but maintenance of the beliefs and the ethos within the surviving religious institutions.

The Russian ethos is an interesting case in point. Peter the Great made the Orthodox Church a State department and when the revolution came it simply stood Caesero-Papism on its head. The Orthodox Church was still treated as a department of state but under the autocratic control of an atheist ruler.

Catholic Monopoly of the Right: In pre-Second World War Europe, the Catholic Right succeeded to a great extent in taking over for a period, the rein of power. Obvious instances are Spain, Portugal, Croatia, pre-war Fascist Italy, Slovakia and, in a sense, the Greece of the Colonels, Hungary under Horthy.

In Spain religious practice became a symbol of conformity and a symbol of non-conformity at least in the period of 1934-1959. After the death of General Franco the Church has partially dissociated

itself from the Right.

Mixed Pattern: Spain like Italy, is predominantly Catholic but the essential feature of a Catholic ethos. in a predominantly Protestant country consists in the stabilisation of the system, by appearing politically on the Left or the Centre. Now I realise that this breeds a generalisation for what a Catholic minority in a Protestant milieu stands for may be said with equal truth about a Protestant minority in a Catholic milieu (example of Prime Minister Couve de Murville in France).* Pierre Mendes France was a Jew and was aggressively to the Left. (In Britain, the only Jewish Prime Minister, Disraeli was more imperialist than the Queen he served). These may be called Survival Techniques. In Stalin's administration his Minister of Commerce was an Armenian. For many years the United Nations representative of Poland was a Jew.

The Latin Pattern contains enormous pressures towards the separation of Church and State, of Christianity and civil religion simply on account of the immense splits over religion as such. Martin insists that the tension between Church and civil religion is restricted both by a desire to retain some national unity through the inclusion of a religious element in overall legitimation and by the fact that a rightwing Catholicism is not easly adapted to a religious position which finally separate faith and nation. Examples cited by Martin are Belgium and Italy which he describes as "polar cases", in that, in

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennal and eCongotism, Liberalism and the Crown sation of the Centre which, however, is more the former, Catholicism, Liberalism and the Crown emerged together in the birth of the nation, whereas in the latter, Liberalism, the Crown and the emerging nation each faced Catholic, more specifically Papal

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In France, the nationalism of the Right has been peculiar in that it can become more French than Catholic thereby creating the kind of civil religion of the Right from which the Church eventually wishes to disengage itself. The Church, after all, did con-

demn Action Francaise.

I would mention the instance of one more European country, West Germany which, as we all know has a Catholic and Protestant population In the twenties and thirties as Nazism steadily grew the new authoritarianism initially attempted to harness the churches but immediately ran up against the older authoritarianism - I hope I am not giving offence to Catholics here - of the Catholic Church Nazism grew steadily anti-Christian and split the Lutherans into the 'German Christians' and the

"Confessing Church".

The history of Christianity under the Nazis is well known. Political Catholicism and Lutheran opposition to Hitler together laid part of the base on which a new united and moderate Conservative party could emerge once Germany was defeated. This turned out to be the Christian Democratic-Union, which, incidentally, had a devoted Catholic leader Herr Honrad Adenauer, but also served to re-integrate Catholics into the mainstream of German society. Martin says that to be a Catholic was an excellent recommendation to a key-post, even though the party was not explicitly confessional. Catholics even saw the way open to a rechristianisation of society to be undertaken in ecumenical alliance with believing Protestants.

Understandably, the rivals to CDU, the Social Democratic Party (SPD) had to change its own stance and under the famous Bad Godesberg thesis, SPD changed its traditional opposition to the Church and religion and offered to respect the "special mission of the Churches". From 1966 onwards the votes of the Catholic majority began to shift toward the control of the Catholic majority began to shift toward the SPD. Thus 76 per cent of practising . Catholic voted for the CDU in 1953, 61 per cent in 1961 and by the late sixties the Catholic hierarchy publicly stated its political neutrality and unwilling ness to recommend how a Catholic should vote.

This does not mean that religion no longer affects party choice: the liberal Free Democratic Party is predominantly Protestant and relatively secularist in image. If we think of the Soviet Union as a secular state — if you ask me, all that Stalin did was to replace one religion by another — then it is interesting how resting how religion by another — then it is The last study was made adjusted to communism. last study was made around 1965 by Aptehman in and around the real and around the region of Leningrad, which is instructive. What he found was this: skilled workers in heavy and metal was the skilled workers in heavy and metal-working industry had their children baptised the least working industry had their capecity baptised the least; workers in light industry, especially small poorly ally small, poorly mechanised ones, baptised their children somewhat children somewhat more. Construction workers, who were intermittently in Leningrad and possessed low skills and education brotients. skills and education, baptised their children most

per cent in 1963. Only one per cent of doctors had running with the hare, of pursuing a strategy of their children baptised, and seven per cent of engineers. "Socialist in form and national in content": their control education, it was found that those with In terms ducation hardly cared to have their children higher education hardly cared to have their children higher the percentage is 0.6. Interestingly baptised, the people who had children baptised were enough, the ported on by civic organisations as normally reported on by civic organisations as normally reported on by civic organisations as normally reported on by civic organisations as labour discipline. Doesn't participate affairs". Still more interesting is the statistic: In the suppressed Census of 1936, some 56 per cent of Soviet supplessed reported as "believers"! Incidentally, the Soviet Union has many sects and a church. The repression of the Church and the suppression of the older communitarian sects pushed many members of both the Church and the older sects towards a less visible form of individualistic religion: the Baptists.

Before I take leave of Europe, I would like to make one final reference to the Soviet Union which is in a limited way a "secular"; state. I have given some indication of how the Christian religion has fared in the Soviet Union. But how has Islam fared? It must be remembered that in Soviet Central Asia, the Sunni-Islam which predominates there is even more a clergyless religion than that of the Baptists. Interestingly again the Soviet authorities did proclaim an ecclesiastical establishment there with four muftis, but, as Rasma Karklins has stated in her book Ethnic Relations in the USSR, that was "in

order to control Islam better".

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Now, according to tradition, a believer in Islam has to observe the five pillars of faith: fasting during the month of Ramazan, daily prayers, a pilgrimage to Mecca, the payment of alms and the profession of faith. According to Karklins, none of the five obligations is, in fact, obligatory. Islam as an official religion is lax in the Soviet Union. As a Soviet commentator has remarked "the objective of Islam's adaptation to Soviet life is to preserve the cult's influence on believers in a society where atheism is the predominant world view."

No government can prohibit fasting, but it is regularly attacked by Soviet anti-religious propaganda (Karklins wrote in 1986 and after glasnost and perstroika, it is possible things have changed). Fasting is condemned as anti-social. Regarding prayers, Karklins noted that while Muslims prayed, younger Muslims were "ashamed to pray openly in

Russian-dominated environments".

Where the Muslim influence is very strong, Communism, evidently, has come to term with Islam. When Muslims observe their own holidays, Communist authorities look the other way rather than

get into open confrontation with the believers. While circumcision is not obligatory and Soviet propaganda denounces it as barbaric and unhygienic, it is mand the contract of Kazait is mandatory for the people in Kirghizstan, Kaza-khistan and try for the people in Kirghizstan, is done by khistan and Uzbekistan and circumcision is done by including Communist party workers. Yet Karklins makes the point that "Islam in Soviet Central A makes the point that "Islam in Soviet Central Asia is accommodative of the 'powers-that-Islam has compromised in many ways. An orthodox wedding may take place, but then it is im-mediately fell in may take place, but then it is immediately followed by a 'Komsomol' wedding. The approach is lowed by a 'Komsomol' wedding and approach is one of hunting with the hounds and

If I have dwelt at some length on the role of religion in societies in Europe which are either dormantly or professedly secular (If Britain has its established church, its effect, insofar as government is concerned, is limited to ceremonial occasions like the crowning of the monarch), it is merely to show that secularism is not peculiar to India and that it is practiced, one way or the other, in several countries elsewhere in the world. One could further dissect the role of religions in such countries as Turkey, Yugoslavia, Malta, China and Japan but the general thrust of my argument is that every society has its own ways of religion coming to terms with the government.

I now come to the case of India which, naturally, interests us most, in part because we profess to be a secular state, but more especially because this is one country which probably has the largest number of religions functioning and alive in the land.

What does secularism mean? We can go to an old expert, Jawaharlal Nehru who, in a foreword to Raghunath Singh's Dharam Nirpeksh Raj (1961) has given us a reasonable definition. Nehru first disabused the minds of people who thought secularism meant "something opposed to religion". He "That obviously is not correct. What it means is that it is a state which honours all faiths equally and gives them equal opportunities; that, as a state, it does not allow itself to be attached to one faith or religion, which then becomes the state religion". Nehru noted that the concept of secularism is a "modern" one. He said:

India has a long history of religious tolerance. That is one aspect of a secular state, but it is not the whole of it. In a country like India which has many faiths and religions, no real nationalism can be built up except on the basis of secularity. Any narrower approach much necessarily exclude a section of the population and then nationalism itself will have a much more restricted meaning than it should possess". Nehru dismissed narrow religious nationalisms as "relics of a past age and no longer relevant today.

He pointed out that our Constitution lays down

that we are a secular state and he added:

We have not only to live up to the ideals proclaimed in our constitution, but make them part of our thinking and living and thus build up a really integrated nation. That, I repeat, toes not mean absence of religion, but putting religion on a different plane from that of normal political and social life. Any other approach in India would mean the break-up of India.

One suspects that, by and large, Indians have been living up to the concept of secularism which might be better described as sarva dharma samabhava - looking at all religions with equal respect of equidistancing oneself from all religions. We don't have a coronation as we have no king. We have a President, but he is not installed by a religious ceremony. Nor are Governors, or Chief Ministers though at all official ceremonies, leading religious leaders do get invited.

One suspects, though, that there are minor infringements as when foundation stones are laid

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when a Governor or Chief Minister may be part are likely to have an influence on results of elections of a foundation stone ceremony that is overly have now been split in such a way that Muslim votes Hindu. Dr Rajendra Prasad, for instance, as are rendered ineffective. A survey should be President of India went for the punarutthan ceremony of the Somnath Temple, somewhat to the annoyance of Prime Minister Nehru. He could claim that he went there in his personal capacity but at his level, it is difficult to separate the personal from the official. Ever since Indira Gandhi came to power, there has been a fall in secular standards. Her visits to temples etc. have been widely publicised and while she might have visited temples in her private capacity the publicity given to such visits detracted from the concept of the secular State.

The State is having its moments of embarrassment as aggressive Islam, for example, is raising religious issues that put the State in the dock. There is the classic instance of the Ram Janmabhoomi/Babri Mosque controversy. At some point or other in time, the State through the Judiciary, may be forced to make a pronouncement on who will inherit the land and the premises. The State has been trying to buy time in the hope that the communities concerned will come to an amicable settlement. But what if they won't? At present the situation is quiescent and it remains a "communal" issue. But very soon it might assume political overtones and then the State has to face it fair and square. For in India every issue, ultimately, will assume political overtones because of the votes to be garnered. In past years - except during the 1977 general elections -Muslims have more or less voted solidly for the Congress Party as its only saviour. The Muslims saw in Jawaharlal Nehru a bulwark against creeping communalism and the Congress was a convenient shelter. It is unlikely that the situation will remain the same in future.

A sense of alienation can already be discerned in the set of 23 "demands" that the Shahi Imam of Delhi - a self-appointed Muslim leader - has submitted to the Government. Among the demands is one that says Article 44 of the Constitution should be repealed.

What does Article 44 say? It says, simply and plainly: "Uniform Civil Code for its Citizens: The State shall endeavour to secure for the citizens a uniform civil code throughout the territory of India". Note the words "shall endeavour". The Article does NOT say: "shall secure", making a uniform civil code mandatory. It merely says "shall endeavour", which is a different cup of tea. Here there are genuine differences of opinion. Some maintain that no emotional integration is possible without bringing all citizens (belonging to all religions, obviously) under a common civil code. At the height of the Roman Empire, Roman Law prevailed. To claim that one is a Roman meant one belonged to a lawabiding class. Civis Romanus sum - I am a Roman citizen — was said with pride. The Shahi Imam insists that this shall not be so. One suspects that many are opposed to him not because he is wrong in his demand, but because of his stridency which offends many.

Another demand of the Shahi Imam is more dangerous. He says: "Constituencies where Muslims are rendered ineffective. A survey should be done and the original constituencies must be reconstituted There should be no further splitting of constituencies".

The demand implies that somehow Muslims are still a separate people and cannot be treated as ordinary citizens. The Shahi Imam wants them to be "effective". What he thereby means is that he wants them to have a controlling voice in whatever is done which is just another way of saying that the Muslim voter, cumulatively, wants to have the power of blackmail. This is a dangerous demand. It is doubtful whether the Government willfully have changed the boundaries of districts in recent years If anything, the Communists under Namboodiripad permitted the formation of a Muslim-majority district in Kerala which has set a bad precedent, in a secular state such manipulation of boundaries should be not only frowned upon, but positively discouraged.

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The Muslims have posed political difficulties to India which is not yet out of the woods. The main problem has been in Assam where poor Muslim Bangla deshis have, over the years, migrated to neighbouring Assam in search of a living thus upsetting the demographic balance. The Assamese have reacted sharply to this and the reaction has been partly linguistic, partly religious. There has always been a haunting fear that if Muslims ever come to become a majority in Assam, they will claim separation from India and in the context of the formation of Pakistan, this fear cannot be dismissed as totally irrational. It is this depressing fear of further dismemberment that is at the root of so much animosity between the native Assamese and

the migrant Muslim.

The only other religious community that has caused a political problem is the Sikh community which is in a majority in the Punjab, a border state. The demand for a separate Sikh state has been raised off and on for many years but never was it more virulently pressed than in those brief months of the rise of Bhindranwale who mixed up religion and politics to make a dangerous and heady brew. Bhindranwale is no more, but the issue has not yet been solved but has been fuelled by assistance from across our borders.

In an ideal secular state no religious problem should arise to disturb the polity. In many ways India is an ideal secular state. It functions with great circumspection and takes great pains to main tain a semblance of sarva dharma samabhava. Indeed this is sometimes taken to ludicrous extent. If the Prime Minister visits a temple, which he is free to visit, he feels compelled to visit a church or a mos que or any wayside shrine to show his impartiality If he claims to be a Hindu and feels an honest urge to visit a Hindu temple, he should feel free to do so without entertaining a sense of guilt. But that is how it is.

Nowhere in the Third World is there so much tolerance of other religions — at the governmental (Continued on page 30)

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Role of Local Radio

P.C. JOSHI

This (the Radio) is a miraculous power, I see. Shakti, the miraculous power of God, Mahatma Gandhi,

Hindustan Times, November 13, 1947.

DEVELOPMENT communication enters an era of new challenges and opportunities as the formulation of the Basic Approach and Development Strategy for the Eighth Five Year Plan is put on the national agenda. Most exciting and challenging seem now the orospects for radio broadcasting if the focus of national planning shifts from large to small-scale peasant agriculture as the leading sector, to rural diversification and transformation as a priority task and to decentralised planning as an urgent necessity. These shifts in approach are desired for the fulfilment of the basic needs of the masses and for mobiisation of local resources and manpower through greater mass participation and involvement at the

In other words, the new Economic Approach and the new Development Strategy must reflect the vast awakening among the masses and their new urges for a better life under conditions of growing equality and justice. They must, therefore, accord a high priority to unorganised sectors representing production by the masses; they must not allow organised sectors representing production by large producers and entrepreneurs to dominate and marginalise the unorganised sectors. Such an approach and strategy are bound to involve political and economic decentralisation and to telease production initiatives and participatory im-Pulses and urges from below on a scale without any past precedent and parallel. The communication demands of this new mass-oriented approach and strategy are bound to be qualitatively different and divergent from those of an approach and strategy centred on the large producers and on big entrepreneurs and on centralisation of programme-making and its implementation at the top.

COMMUNICATION has a more limited scope when the units involved in decision-making are very arge in size and scale but small in numbers and when the units involved in their implementation to whom the decisions and the know-how concerning hese decisions and the know-now constant large has but any have to be transmitted are also large in size but small in numbers. But now the process of

Dr. Joshi is Chairman of Indian Institute of Mass Communication, New Delhi.

programme-making requires adjustment to regional and area variation and specificities at the micro level and that too in the country of sub-continental size and diversity. Further, under the new approach the units involved both in programme-making and their implementation and small in size but staggering in numbers; they are also dispersed over more than half a million villages of varying sizes in the 446 districts of India. Again, agriculture being a State subject, the powers of decision-making are to be exercised at the state and district levels rather than at central levels.

As a result of these new features, the communication dimension of development assumes complexity of an unprecedented kind. What is required now is not only communication between the Centre and the States and between their various departments and ministries but between planners, experts and administrators at all levels. Far more compelling is communication of all these agents of development with millions of small and tiny producers in the countryside having unique and specific problems in their own small and tiny enterprises.

In other words, communication in the new phase requires continuous adjustment to the requirement of mass-oriented development strategy. This means having a keen perception of local specificities and peculiarities, of problems which vary from area to area, group to group and community to community. The new approach requires new communication strategies which can generate as well as disseminate packages of information relevant to widely divergent local needs and requirements on a continuing basis. Such information packages cannot 'be provided by a centralised communication network which generates and transmits only standardised, undifferentiated and uniform messages from top to bottom. Such a centralised network is alienated from local needs and the local milieu and is incapable of sensitising the top level planners and policy-makers about the perceptions of the people at the bottom layers of the economy and society.

It is essential for the success of the new planning approach and strategy, therefore, that a decentralised communication system is created under which the communication media as well as the human agents using the media are capable of providing information support to the development process at the grassroots; and under which planning becomes highly sensitive to the specific local milieu and local perceptions and also responsive to local diversity of needs and demands arising from community, group, gender and

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age variations.

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In this emerging era of shift from centralism to diversification. The capacity of indigenous institutions to diversification. decentralisation, homogenisation to diversification and manipulative to participatory communication, radio broadcasting has an inherent superiority over television. This arises partly from its easy accessibility to vast masses (following the innovation of the low-cost portable transistor operated with battery) and partly from its easy adaptibility to local needs and message-making and above all, from its amenability to becoming a medium of participatory twoway communication (as stressed long back so forcefully by Burtold Brecht, the German playwright)!

The evidence of greater mass access to radio as against TV is provided by the fact that, as against about 10 million TV sets which are mostly concentrated in big and medium urban centres and urbanised villages, there are, according to recent estimates prepared by the Audience Research Division of AIR, about 90 million households having radio sets in India. Of the households surveyed, 78 per cent urban and 64 per cent rural households owned radio

It is obvious that even without a conscious policy of promoting the equitable distribution of the radio, the distribution of radio sets as between different regions, classes and rural versus urban areas, was far less skewed and more equitable than the distribution of television sets. Further, there is also ample evidence that during forty years of India's planned development, radio has played an important role as a development agent, specially as an aid to the Green Revolution. This stands in sharp contrast to television which has so far served more as an effective agent of disseminating consumerist values than of promoting genuine development values and orientations. Reference can be made to The Farm and Home Units of Akashwani which were started in 1966 to support the IADP. It is noteworthy that one of the high-yielding varieties of Rice-ADT 27popularised by radio came to be known to the farmers of Tanjore District as 'Radio Rice'!

AS we enter the new era of extension of the Green Revolution to the backward regions and classes hitherto unaffected by it, the development challenge of promoting a small-and-marginal farmer-led Green Revolution also turns into a communication-cumextension challenge of vast proportions. This challenge requires a decisive transition from the National Network Broadcasting to Local Radio Broadcasting.

The case for local planning supported by local communication was best presented by the Report of the Asian Development Bank in its last survey entitled Rural Asia: Challenge and Opportunity (1977) in the following words: "A programme oriented towards economic betterment of the poor is handicapped by large gaps in knowledge. Very little is known about the socio-economic milieu in which the poor live and operate. What are their mainsprings of action? What leverages exist? What type of social and cultural constraints do the poor face? Which principles of organisation are applicable to these groups? How does one identify the various strata

The capacity of indigenous institutions to delive the goods are seldom assessed before the programm for the poor is launched. The cooperative and the existing bureaucratic machinery are in most case incapable of reaching the poor sections. What are the viable alternatives in these circumstances? Sud understanding requires familiarity with conditions a the 'grassroots', based on a two-way communication

For promoting such two-way communication by ween the community of farmers and producers the bottom on the one hand and technical experis planners and administrators at the top on the other, the local radio has immense possibilities which

have been adequately tapped so far,

A new role for local communication agencies, spe cially the local radio, is fast emerging as one take cognizance of the vastly different problems of the Green Revolution in the rice producing regions a wheat-producing region contrasted with the According to M.S. Swaminathan, the success of the Green Revolution in the rice producing region and in dry farming areas will entirely depend upon the adequate co-ordination between state and pub lic agencies at the top on one hand and effective community cooperation and endeavour on the ground level on the other. Dr. Swaminathan remark as follows: "The emerging agricultural technology of two kinds with regard to the case of adoption In one kind, as for example the new technology wheat cultivation, the economic benefits derived by a farmer by adopting the technology are not infly enced by what his neighbouring farmer does or does not do. In other words, the technology is capable of successful individual adoption in economic terms In the other kind, the economic benefits conferred the technology on the farmer will be proportional h the extent of cooperative action generated on the part of an entire village or watershed community. Riv and cotton cultivation and the prevention of discussions epidemics in cattle are good examples. Even Punjab the average yield of cotton is low bene only 368 kg per hectare as contrasted with the Arab Republic of Egypt where it is 780 kg per ho tare. Pest control and water management in rice in best done cooperatively in a village...All these aspect of the new technology would need understanding cooperation among neighbouring small farmers, this is not achieved the risk element in crop production will be a series of the risk tion will be high. Cooperative effort is needed non importantly in dry farming regions" (M.S. Swall nathan 1983: 112-113).

Considering the highly complex nature of the tasks of extending the Green Revolution to not crops, new areas and new classes of farmers in jers of community of community awareness and action, one has also new measure of the new communication challenges well as possible to the new communication challenges as well as possible to the new communication challenges and action, one challenges are the new communication challenges and action, one challenges are the new communication challenges are the new communicat as well as possibilities. On adequate communication support depends adequate response to the demand of scientific agricult of scientific agriculture and industry by millions small farmers small farmers and artisans who are steeped in teracy and in the teracy and in the social outlook and habits associal with traditional with traditional agriculture and industry, These to be neutralised only by educational and organizational initiatives of the second control of the second tional initiatives at the micro levels. Tradition

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traditional assumption requirements of a technologilonger the line economy. A dynamic economy calls cally progressive economy. A dynamic economy calls for more sophisticated and efficient to deliver cally progress ophisticated and efficient communicaorogrammi e and the for a far months which can reduce the time required for Hon system reliable and relevant messages and informafrom one point to another and which can also What are nces? Such overcome the formidable constraints created by vast disovercome in transmitting information regarding technology, input, credit and water availability, weather, pice situation, market signals, etc. etc.

All these new demands call for an efficient and responsive communication system at the local levels; hence the importance of the local radio as an information integrating and distributing agency to local communities. The role of the local radio as a support system is as crucial for agricultural and rural development programmes as it is for the programmes of Basic Needs of the people and for social develop-

ment projects and activities.

Finally, a new awareness developing even in the developed countries about the potentialities of the local radio for promoting participatory communication and for reviving and revitalising community life by "combatting loneliness, isolation and fragmentaion of communities", consider the following obsermions by the Report of the Committee on the Future of Broadcasting in Great Britain chaired by Lord Annan:

"BBC local radio checked the ever-present lendency for national radio to become dominated by London and big production centres of Manchester, Birmingham and Bristol...Local radio was the place where ordinary people could take part in the programmes." (p. 89).

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Local radio has quite a different kind of relationship with its community, and the community has, and should have, an almost proprietary feeling about its local station, that it cannot have about a national network. Networks are rightly looking for the common ground where people from all over the country can meet, local stations are looking for the village green where people from a single locality can be themselves and assert their separate identity. Net-Works do the job better as they broaden their covelage till they include the entire nation; local stations do their job better as they focus more and more sharply and better as they focus more and Metsharply on a single individual neighbourhood. Net-Work radio report events of national and international significance, but it is a local radio that tells about a directly affect us about events that immediately and directly affect our actions and our lives. A row over a network programme may have repercussions in Parliament Cahinet. and Cabinet; a row over a local programme rarely gets behind a single Town Hall."

CONSIDERING the great possibilities for local tadio, Lord Annan Committee proposed a separate authority dedicated to local broadcasting.

If the principle of the local broadcasting is less than the local broadcasting in the local broadcasting. If the principle of community life is being redis-overed through of community life is being rediscovered through local radio even in Great Britain,

communication agencies which have been supporting where industrialisation and modernisation created, where industrialisation and modernisation created, a national society by destroying local communities, traditional information requirements of a technologi- how much more important is local and appropriate the information of a technologiwhere local communities still continue to be the bedrock of the Indian society and civilisation and where bypassing local communities in effect means marginalising the common people themselves.

It is time that a new community-oriented communication vision is formulated suited to the Indian milieu which is characterised by the supreme importance of local communities in the Indian social structure. The local radio will have pride of place as and when the communication priorities are also reformulated in response to the community principle which is so basic to Indian cultural tradition.

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GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL

ICA 2206/89

Myth of Urban Rehabilitation with People's Participation

ASOK MITRA

I was visiting Vienna in August 1960. The four powers had withdrawn, restoring the city to the local authority. Vienna had been extensively damaged more by artillery fire and street fighting than by direct air attack. The great St. Stephen's cathedral was still boarded up, although the State Opera House had been restored and Rosenkavalier was on. I lived in Delhi at the time and was indirectly associated with the urban planning of Delhi. My interest lay in the rehabilitation of old Delhi: Jehanabad. How to preserve its historic character and flavour by keeping its ancient public and private buildings and network of lanes, roads and plazas as intact as possible and yet modernise its communications, thereby assisting further growth of human enterprise. I swore at the time and still do by Patrick Geddes's philosophy of conservative surgery. For those who are not acquainted with it, the modern equivalent phrase would be plastic surgery: the art of removing overgrowths and scars which have overlaid or threatened the healthy tissue and restoring the latter to health with the minimum of grafting.

I was impressed by what I saw in Vienna. At intervals of roughly a quarter of a mile along the Kaiserstrasse and at every cross street of the Ringstrasse I saw large white boards showing on a large enough scale the ground plan of the neighbourhood marking the ground plan of each building. Superposed on the map in a different ink was the projected reconstruction plan, inviting the citizen's comments with the assurance that he would be heard in person if it appeared that he had made a point.

This was something which had not occurred to any of our city development authorities in India engaged in the reconstruction of their city cores or peripheries. The Calcutta Improvement Trust held the palm in 1960 among its peers in the country for its rich record of conservative surgery. Its activities had quietly transformed Calcutta since the beginning of the century into a gracious and well integrated city by the year 1939. But even the CIT with its proud tradition had not shed its paternalistic ways or thought of people's participation of the kind I observed in Vienna.

Something wholly unexpected happened in 1973 which struck hard at established norms, ethical practices, philosophies and scales of urban planning and construction that had organically evolved in India. The little that had organically evolved in India. The like of it had threatened to develop once before in 1971. before in 1861-65. The Civil War raging in the USA at that time had led to the blockade, under Abraham

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The author is a former member of the Indian Civil Service. He presented this paper at an Indo-German seminar on "Urban Rehabilitation of Inner City Lold recently at Max Inner City Areas" held recently at Max Mueller Bhavan, Calcutta.

Lincoln's orders, of ships carrying cotton from the southern states to England. This in turn created unlimited demand for Indian cotton in Britain. Fabulous windfall profits were made by Bombay merchants which cried out for speculative investment. It touched off what came to be known as the Backbay Reclamation Scheme in Bombay city. Companies selling bullish shares mushroomed with phenomenal speed and land prices skyrocketed until the maritime blockade was withdrawn at the end of the Civil War in the USA and the bubble burst as suddenly as it had swelled. But not until it had left memories of the speculative possibilities of the real estate market in this country.

What happened in 1973 generated a mounting domino effect on most metropolitan and lesser cities. For the first time real estate operators began to orchestrate their activities on a global scale all over India. The hike in oil prices suddenly imposed by the OPEC countries assured an unprecedented, rapidly swelling flow of gulf money from Indian expatriates in that region which favoured unfettered soaring in real estate prices and building activity in India. This massive windfall flow of capital lasted for more than a decade and created a kind of widow's cruse in our real estate world. As a result the kitty went on swelling in spite of so much vulgar, extravagant, and unsightly waste on new construction activity and urban renewal.

There were other evil consequences. Time-tested legislation and institutions for enforcing well formulated principles of functional zoning, assessment of land and property valuation by geographical zones. building legislation, land use, other functional interdependencies, conservation and ecological balance came to be spurned. Established principles of density and circulation of various kinds in the economic, social and cultural life of our cities tended

to be ignored. In a normal self-generating economy returns on real estate and on investments in industrial and commercial ventures have a way of meeting each other on some kind of indifferent curves and of keeping within a rational pattern of overall portfolio management. But the climate seems to get out of hand when sudden windfalls of unanticipated incomes come as a shot in the arm or when the industrial or commercial situation slumps unexpectedly. Ordinarily there are limits to which transgression of established legislation or regulation may be invoked with the help of political lobbying. slush-money or gerrymandering. One of our cele-brated architects, Joseph Allen Stein, who began life assisting Saarinen, told me in 1952 that he had been compelled to leave practising his trade in San Francisco at the end of the Second World War because of the wide range of devious practices restored to by realtors. I have lived long enough in

whole of the downtown area of Connaught Circus.

Also the cynical and blatant manner in which zoning and building regulations laid down by the Delhi Development Authority, the two Municipal Corporations and the Delhi Urban Art Commission were disregarded. Yet in many cases their transgressions were condoned with nominal penalties. It will be generally agreed that some of the new urban construction complexes like those in Connaught Circus of Delhi, Nariman Point of Bombay and the prime commercial and business areas in Calcutta have been converted to places for investing unearned black money to yield returns unimaginable from normal investment channels. These complexes again have had the effect of seriously disturbing cherished values of civic and ethical behaviour. What is more, the existence of established regulatory institutions is often assailed.

For instance, the Calcutta Improvement Trust, as I have observed, built up over the decades a whole edifice of regulations of various kinds, including principles of assessment of properties and valuation of land by specific zones of the city. These criteria might well serve as models of rational procedure in any metropolitan planning and rehabilitation system. Without any well-considered public debate which might serve as a warning, nor offering any cogent explanation, the state government passed an executive order in 1988 dissolving the Calcutta Improvement Trust, subsuming its functions in the Calcutta Metropolitan Development Authority. No clarification was offered as to why this valuable repository of experience and instrument of execution was being demolished at one stroke of the pen, without the sanction of the legislature, nor how the CMDA's competence has since been improved to discharge the functions of the dissolved Trust. Under the circumstances, a reasonable suspicion may arise that the CIT's regulations and norms were proving much too inconvenient for comfort for real estate operators who may have used their political lobby to get

the Trust out of their way.

Permit me to dwell a little longer on this theme. The city's physical growth and extension in the last forty years calls for anxious reappraisal. The city's metropolitan core has not been growing in population. On the contrary it has been steadily losing in population which has been migrating to the rural interstices of the metropolitan region. Thus the size of population living in unhygienic, congested, rural surroundings without any semblance of minimum civic or urban facilities has been steadily growing. The impact of such growth on the future of the city can only be disastrous. The disaster has started to show. The city should have expanded westward across the Hooghly river and its growth and health should have been augmented by encouraging the growth of the urban areas of West Bengal districts. One of the levers of such growth might have been the speediest construction of the second Hooghly bridge. On the contrary a telltale coincidence of circumstances suggesting a well organised lobby seems to be at work delaying its completion as long

Delhi to be able to recount what grees by irregularities and as possible so that the present land prices in the metropolitan core can skyrocket without restraint, facilitating the prospect of high unearned returns on the same piece of land for real estate investors with large hoards of black money. If the second Hooghly bridge is ready today it stands to reason that the price of land in Burrabazar will slump to less than half tomorrow. It is therefore in the interest of landowners in Burrabazar to keep their land soaring in value for as long as they can. For this they must have a new face lift to their Satyanarain Park. To that end it pays to manipulate the hidden levers of delaying the completion of the second bridge. Similar interests operate behind Rawdon Square development proposals because there are numerous low-rise buildings in that area waiting to be torn down and transformed into tall buildings.

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To mention a third illustration in point, in the name of expanding the city eastwards, not only a vital ecological balance and marvellous natural system of recycling of waste is being wantonly dis-turbed in the wetlands, but a very substantial population of socially and vocationally disadvantaged people who keep Calcutta well supplied with vital raw materials, hides, fish and vegetables is going to be uprooted. Calcutta's supply base of fish and vegetables is going to be grievously hurt. The land developed at enormous government expense is steadily going to pass into the hands of large scale real estate operators working on a global scale in India. The CMDA itself no longer acts as a corporate body but operates under the command of a single person, who, however sagacious, cannot claim to replace the collective wisdom of a corporate body. It has no apparatus for long term planning such as the CMPO was once endowed with. The dissolution of the Calcutta Improvement Trust at this point clearing the stage once and for all for adhocism cannot but cause alarm.

To my mind, these are ominous phenomena threatening to make nonsense of rational schemes of urban rehabilitation with people's participation. It is not enough for well-meaning qualified urban planners and architects even with elaborate mechanisms of public consultations at every turn to work out elegant plans only to see them negated or brushed aside in respect of its vital essentials. It is important to take care of first things first and take determined steps to cast out the cancer that invaded the urban polity in 1973 and is now spreading fast by metastasis beyond the metropolitan cities to all important urban centres. A piece of legislation or government regulation represents collective wisdom and is the most explicit forum of public participation. This is at the macropolicy end of the national will.

Let me conclude with the micro end of planning for small income residential complexes. There is now a National Committee on Housing Rights whose demands cry out for serious attention. Finally we have not average have not even begun to invite housewives to advise architects and planning architects and planners as to what internal planning in a small approximately and most in a small apartment will offer the best and most economical arrangements for the kitchen, disposal of sullage, kitchen sullage, kitchen and household waste and garbage, and prove of my thousand waste and garbage. and prove of mutual benefit to individual housing and their neighbourhoods to keep them clean and must acknowledge when we think of the government and the community functioning. efficiently functioning.

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shall conclude by touching on another vital problem of microplanning on the theme of assisting the poor of Calcutta to acquire a stake in the future of the city.

Like America's Statue of Liberty, Calcutta has always beckoned to the poor, the down and out and lost and warmly taken them in its arms. It may have been a city of palaces in the past, but it has always been a city of the poor and the castaway. It is on their cheap labour that not only much of India at one time, but the eastern region and Calcutta even now, have built up India's industry, wealth and infrastructure. If now Calcutta is to be beautified and raised to a place of pride, the poor must be given visible stakes to protect and augment the gifts bestowed by the government or the public spirited citizen. Otherwise the poor will remain apathetic and what is worse, hostile and destructive of any good and attractive facility placed for his aesthetic appreciation alone from a distance.

Let me cite a striking instance in the city's daily life to illustrate my point. A visitor to Calcutta usually harbours nothing but disgust for the city's filth and disarray and contempt for the citizen's lack of pride in his city. The visitor is full of admiration, however, for the almost fanatical pride with which the citizen regards the Metro. Why? In the first place, the Metro administration is responsive to the public's needs. All rakes are scrupulously washed and cleaned before being put out for the day. Next, the Metro authorities are constantly engaged in visible improvements, however small. For instance, installing piped music and information programmes, television, opening more counters for facilitating traffic, modulating the airconditioning educating and entertaining the user, reinforcing guidance and enforcement staff, adjusting frequencies of service in peak and non-peak hours on rush and festive days, opening new intermediate stations, beautifying entrances and platforms for waiting passengers. The citizen on his part is thrilled at these attentions which no other government or municipal facility offers to him. On the contrary, every other facility like the suburban train or the road transportation network seems bent on heaping insult and discomfort on him. He cannot help taking on the of the way the buses are put out on the road unwashed and full of filth inside; the way he is treated as dump, driven cattle on mini state and private buses and is rudely robbed at every step of any semblance of self-respect.

By contrast, the poor and lower middle class blue and white collar worker, the student and the housewife ride the Metro to and from work in the luxury of luxury of a private chartered, airconditioned bus, as it were, which confers much self-esteem. The citizen thus finds thus finds he has a stake in the maintenance of the responsive He does responsive performance of the Metro. He does his best to performance of the Metro. He does bis best to respect and preserve the facility for his own ediformation own ediformation of the Metro. own edification. This is the kind of stake, the give-and take I have a secret to respect the racinty. and take, I have in mind, the necessity of which we

The Victoria Memorial has just been illuminated at considerable cost by the Tatas. The Chowringhee-Park Street corner has been attractively adorned with powerful high mast lamps. The illuminations bring enjoyment. The question is to whom and to how many: Mainly to a few thousand owners of cars who can visit these places and leisurely enjoy them. These are mostly the rich who have other means of enjoyment as well. They would hardly bestir themselves if these facilities fell into desuetude or broke down. The common citizen will not greatly miss the illuminations because he has so few opportunities of enjoying them the way they are best enjoyed.

Scores of Bengal's illustrious sons were too poor in their childhood to afford a lamp for themselves at home and did their lessons and studies under street lamps. There will be many more of them in the future, what with chronic loadshedding and lack of kerosene oil adding to their misery and numbers. In Victoria Memorial and places like the Chowringhee Park Street corner, the illuminations. which being showpieces, are not likely to suffer from loading, brilliantly light up many acres of land enough for all kinds of studies and related activities. Could we not utilise the illuminations, which are now largely running to waste, for organising study and group activity areas for the poor and the young of our city's population? Could we not organise open-air travelling libraries on wheels which would come to these centres every evening and deliver crates of books to study-circles of the young and take them back at the end of say a couple of hours? We could easily have open-air stages for mounting children's group-activity programmes, like plays, charades, recitation competitions, improvisations and impromptu shows. The consulates and government units would perhaps be glad to lend educational and teaching aid films for open air film auditoria for the younger age groups. If the Government, the Corporation, the Citizens' action groups and non-governmental organisations came together, these places of beauty might also serve as useful functional centres to bring up the not-soaffluent but young and adolescent children of the city to grow into responsible and educated citizens. The under privileged resident of Calcutta would then have a stake in sustaining these places of pride just like the Metro.

It will not take an inordinate amount of effort to educate, with the help of instructions broadcast at regular intervals every evening to attending children how to be orderly and keep the place tidy and clean, not to destroy property, plants and the grass, not to litter or disfigure objects of beauty. These places instead of remaining mortuarial and ghostly in their illuminated but lonely splendour will look gay and overflowing with young children, marvellously alive with creative activity and grow into objects of great civic pride.

It is, however, important not to stop at the main show pieces near where the rich live, but to carry slums, with prior assurance of cooperation secured, like Garia, Ganguly Bagan, Haltu, Kasba, Tengra, Beliaghata, Pathuriaghata, Beckbagan, Entally, Khidirpur, Behala, Naktala and so on, and to select open spaces or municipal parks where one or two high-mast powerful lamps may be erected to create miniature facilities similar to those just suggested for Victoria Memorial or Park Street-Chowringhee corner. It is important to carry the mission of culture and awakening of pride and caring, to areas which have never been encouraged so far, to acquire a semblance of self-respect or to develop a stake in the future of this great city. It is important to replace apathy, sullenness and hostility in these areas by a mood of cooperation, hope and participation.

Improvement in livelihood is essential for sustaining cultural activity. Along with cultural activity under the high mast lamps, which will lend a joyous atmosphere, a variety of vocational training activities can systematically be organised for local young men and women, right at their doorstep as it were, creat-

ing enduring bonds of loyalty to this city.

Most great cities have regular flea markets where on certain days and evenings of the week a stretch of road with a path of open land on either side is closed to traffic, and shops on wheels or wheelbarrows or on headloads are set up for retail sale. This can be easily organised in most congested and poorly areas of Calcutta in the evenings. Improvised cricket games on our streets have already shown the

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennal and grander a good argument for replacing this venture into carefully selected congested areas or way. This venture into carefully selected congested areas or way, payement shops and of organising localities areas or way. ugly pavement shops and of organising localities for community activities in the evening.

We could think of many other ways of instilling pride for the city in the heart of the meanest citizen, the secret always being the principle of give-andtake by implanting a stake. Designers, for example, could set about making attractive prototypes of small portable retail kiosks or vending trays suspended from the shoulders, snackbars on wheels, gaily painted and functional, which will incidentally raise the standards of service, make for cheerful and clean surroundings, with facilities for storing garbage.

Children in schools can be encouraged to raise flowering plants, by lending them small potted plants for tending at home. The ones who raise the best plants and get the best flowers may be awarded small useful prizes. This may teach them not to destroy plants in public parks or other people's gardens or pluck flowers indiscriminately. Our target should be children in the lower classes of lowly primary schools - either run by the Corporation or sponsored. The motto should be to catch them young in the poorly areas so that they can develop a variety of interests, giving them a commitment to the community and the city which nurture them. Unless these stakes are steadily developed and sustained 'we' alone caring for Calcutta are doomed to a sisyphean effort. It is 'they' whose involvement will guarantee the perpetuation of a growing movement.

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This is the fourth part of a work written by veteran CPI leader and Marxist ideologue S.G. Sardesai being serialised in Mainstream. The first, second and third parts appeared in the Mainstream issues of April 29, 1989; May 6, 1989; and May 13, 1989 respectively. —Editor

RRIVING at a national consensus on program-A matic issues does not mean that conflicts and contradictions in the country will come to an end

and Indians will "live happily ever after."

The contradictions are there and they are serious because there are powerful social forces whose narrow, selfish interests clash with national interests. And such forces are not going to surrender their vested interests voluntarily. They are already resorting to vicious methods to defend their privileged positions and are going to intensify their offensive against all progressive, democratic forces.

In a word, the conflict between national and anti-national forces is a reality. It cannot be bypassed and is going to continue. That raises the question of identifying the reactionary, anti-national

forces as also the progressive national forces.

Our traditional understanding of this question has been based on a strictly class evaluation. Imperialism, the monopoly bourgeoisie, the feudals are the enemy forces, the non-monopoly bourgeoisie have a dual role; the petty-bourgeoisie are vacillating; the rural poor and middle peasantry are the allies of the working class; the rich peasant also has a dual role but is becoming growingly reactionary. It follows that the working class and its allies have to unite and fight the enemy forces to a finish while maintaining a relationship of unity and struggle with the non-monopoly bourgeoisie. The success of such a struggle will open the path to

This basic understanding is not untrue and it would be wrong to reject it as outdated because of all manner of new developments and complexities

of the Indian situation.

At the same time, while this categorisation is helpful as a broad, guiding line, it is not possible to deny that the complexities (specifics) of the Indian reality demand a concrete examination of which social forces are progressive and which reactionary tionary. Unless this is done the basic characterisation becomes a stereotype framework which hardly helps us in actual politics.

The indication is already there. We hardly use the terminology of this categorisation any more excent in the categorisation and the catego except in our strictly theoretical writings. We now speak of our strictly theoretical writings. speak of the unity of Left, democratic, secular forces against the unity of Left, democratic, secular forces against the forces of imperialism and its internal allies, the forces of imperiansin and cracy security. Cracy, secularism, national integrity and security.

This is howard in the control of the contro This is how the new reality forces itself on our conscious the new reality forces it in an ad hoc, consciousness though we recognise it in an ad hoc,

pragmatist way. Obviously this is not a satisfactory

This is a task of the entire communist (and democratic) movement in the country. It can be tackled only by collective effort. My effort is to state the complexities of the problem, not so much to work out its concrete solution (or solutions) which is extremely difficult. I do not claim clarity and precision in the matter of the solution of the problems involved.

The role of imperialism is not difficult to clarify though common people do not see it spontaneously as they did when India was under direct British rule.

Imperialism, spearheaded by the USA, has all along tried its hardest to prevent the independent, self-reliant, industrial development of India. The various forms and instruments it uses for the purpose (foreign investment, technology, World Bank loans, unequal trade, etc.) are well-known. It threatens India militarily, directly and through Pakistan. It supports every separatist and divisive force in India for destabilisation and national disintegration.

It has failed till now to achieve its aim and the Indian economic and political independence is stronger today than at the time we achieved independence. But that is not due to any lack of hostile effort on the part of the US rulers. In part, it is due to the fact that the Indian bourgeoisie are very much stronger than those of the other Third World countries. It is very much due to the powerful economic, industrial and scientific support India receives from the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. In part, it is also due to the fact that the US economic and industrial power has been declining in recent years and the US economy itself is caught in a deepening crisis. All these factors, plus the change in the world balance of forces in favour of socialism and anti-colonialism explain why the Indian state has been and continues to be anti-imperialist despite the concessions made by the Congress rulers to imperialism.

So the identification of the forces and role of imp-

erialism is not difficult.

It is when we come to the internal class and social forces that their clear-cut identification and demarcation becomes very difficult.

First, as regards the progressive, anti-imperialist elements of the bourgeoisie and the anti-national

elements of the bourgeoisie.

The monopoly sections are no doubt in a stronger position to enter into collaborative deals with foreign monopoly capital. But, among them there

are those who secure foreign capital and techno- flethous and secularism. All talk of democracy and secularism. All talk of democracy logy while keeping substantial control over their industrial concerns, and who, after mastering foreign technique, gradually dispense with foreign collaboration. Such sections strengthen the country's industrial self-reliance and independence. They are not pro-imperialist in the sense in which we normally use the word collaborationist. So the terms 'monopolist' and 'pro-imperialist' are not synonymous.

Besides, there are collaborationist elements among the non-monopoly bourgeoisie also. So, not all non-monopoly sections are anti-imperialist.

A sample survey of the various Indian industries and industrialists is needed to get a clearer idea of which sections are collaborationists in the antinational sense of the term and which are antiimperialist in the sense of being helpful to India's independent, self-reliant development.

I think there is a practical and very significant test (criterion) in this matter, a test, so to say, to

separate the wheat from the chaff

All capitalists, small or big, try to make as much profit as they can, if for no other reason than this that fierce competition makes this necessary for their survival So, no demarcation can be made on that issue.

But there is a certain distinction, though not clear-cut, between those elements among the bourgeoisie (unfortunately very large) who are purelý or essentially parasitical, who want to make a fast buck by hook or crook in the shortest time, and those who are serious about production, serious about improving the technique and products of their industry.

By and large, it is the latter who have a nationalist, patriotic outlook. And, it is the former who barter away anything and everything for the sake of lucre. I will add that it is these elements that are also the most venal, the most anti-social, so debased that they do not care if society goes to ruin

if that serves their petty, selfish interest.

In fact, I want to highlight the general political interconnection between being honest, conscientious and hard-working in one's vocation of life and being progressive; and being corrupt and criminal in one's life and being reactionary and anti-social. Even we, of the Left, give little thought to this question though, apart from its ethical aspect, politically it has become very important for the struggle between the progressive and the reactionary forces.

I will give a very concrete and telling example to

corroborate the point.

Let us take the case of Tamil Nadu, Andhra and Haryana. Which honest worker, peasant, student, youth, teacher, professor, doctor, scientist, journalist, housewife, government servant or even industrialist in these States is going to believe that the contest between NTR, Devi Lal and Karunanidhi on one side and the Congress-I on the other is a struggle between democracy, socialism and the people's interests on one side and authoritarianism, gangsterism, casteism and communalism on the other?

To all honest people it is clear as daylight that both sides are resorting to corrupt and gangster

democracy and secularism. All talk of democracy, secularism, the toiling masses, etc. is nothing but a cynical cover for defending various vested interests entrenched in the economy, the caste system, religion, and so on. And hence the contest is nothing but a gangster war for power politics between rival groups of the vested interests.

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Besides, there is a danger in such a situation which must not be overlooked. It makes all honest, progressive elements in society cynical and withdraw from participation in politics altogether. And we know from the history of other countries that the de-politicalisation of honest social elements is what suits the worst and most extreme reactionary forces in the country. That is just the situation in which reactionary dictatorships come to power in the name of fighting corruption, social disorder, and what

At the same time, it is not at all true that antisocial, criminal, reactionary forces constitute the majority of a country's population. The fact is the reverse. It is the honest, conscientious, hard-working elements that constitute the great majority. It is they that constitute the mass base of the progressive

Readers may feel that I am digressing from the question: whose unity and against whom? I am not. The point I am stressing is of vital importance for building Left and democratic unity, the unity of the anti-imperialist, secular forces, the unity of all progressive, patriotic forces and so on, about whom we

of the Left are constantly speaking.

In this context it is very relevant to refer to the connection between corruption and degenerate politics sharply emphasised by Lenin. When Lenin introduced the New Economic Policy in Soviet Russia in 1921 the country was in a state of utter ruin due to seven years of war, civil war and foreign intervention. Chaos and rampant corruption had spread all over the country from which even the demobilised Red Army soldiers (who had performed miracles of heroism and sacrifice in the preceding period) and Party cadres were not exempt.

Lenin addressed the second All-Russia Congress of Political Education Departments on October 17, 1921 on the NEP and the tasks of the Political Education Departments in that connection. Following is

an extract from his speech.

"If such a thing as bribery is possible it is no use talking about politics. Here we have not even an approach to politics, here it is impossible to pursue politics; because all measures are left hanging in the air and produce absolutely no results. A law applied in conditions which permit of widespread bribery can only make matters worse. Under such condimental conditions whatever can be pursued, the fundamental conditions whatever can be pursued, the fundamental conditions and the fundamental conditions where the fu mental condition for engaging in politics is lacking. (Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 33, p. 78). This is followed by his arrest of fight followed by his appeal to the delegates to fight bribery with all their strength.

It may be said that this aim cannot be achieved in a capitalist country. But that does not lessen by an iota the need of seeing the connection between corruption ween corruption and anti-people politics and the

I will proceed with our new social forces.

The urban middle class, what our statisticians broadly refer to as the "service sector", has expanded enormously. I have mind in the class which comes from what we formerly called the "upper, middle and lower middle class". We find it in various industrial, commercial and business concerns, in government services, and also in educated middle class professions.

This class has definitely become affluent. It is not the capitalist class, but does belong to what we

call the nouveau riche.

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It is common to say that the rich in India have become richer and the poor, poorer. This is not quite true. The poor in the villages who flock to the various rural employment schemes started by the Government all over the country, no doubt, suffer from penury. But vast members from the middle class have definitely become affluent.

This class is already a serious problem for all progressive causes, and is going to become more so. it is extremely self-centred, not moved by the misery and pauperisation even in the urban areas, and is the unabashed protagonist of American culture and consumerist social "values". It pooh-poohs all politics and politicians but invariably supports

Rightist politics in practice.

What must now be called the lower middle class in the urban and small town areas, educated or semi-educated, is in a very bad plight. numbers of youth from this class are unemployed. Unfortunately, in recent times, larger sections from them are being drawn into chauvinist and communal movements than in Left-led movements. Good many are drawn even in anti-social, lumpen, criminal activities.

Really speaking, this mass is a reserve force for the Left and progressive movements. But our approach towards them is almost exclusively on their economic demands. They have innumerable other interests and attractions such as literature, various performing arts, sports, excursions, social service and so on. Besides, it is wrong to imagine that they are indifferent to ideology and politics. But Left politics and ideology have to be taken to them on issues in which they are interested and in a language that makes sense to them. This task is badly neglected. If that is done our movements of youth, students and the unemployed will surely defeat the chauvinists and communalists who are now attracting these urban sections in a

The problems of the new working class and its movement are vast and complicated. Besides, they can be explained only by those who have full knowledge of the current conditions of the working class, long experience of the movement and the necessary ideological equipment. I can only refer

to a few general aspects of the problem. The industrial working class today is unquestionably far more educated and technically trained than its preceding educated and technically trained than its preceding generation. Economically, the organised works hised workers have definitely improved their stan-

need to fight against corrupt political elements for dard of living angular trade unions have become building Left and democratic unity.

more powerful, assertive and salf-confidences. developments are a valuable advance and a new asset of the movement. However, it is necessary to note that the better paid sections of the working class have become de-classed and developed

bourgeois consumerist values.

Simultaneously, the working class movement as a whole is far more splintered than before. It is to the credit of the National Campaign Committee that it has brought about a considerable measure of cooperation and joint activity between trade unions in different industries. It has organised very laudable all-India joint actions including strikes. But the political conflicts and union rivalries among the central trade union organisations and federations are deep and often bitter. And that has severely restricted the nature of issues that can be taken up by the National Campaign Committee.

Above all, by its very nature the National Campaign Committee is so shackled that it is incapable of developing the political consciousness and political role of the working class in national politics. In result, regional and even communal influences are spreading among workers instead of the working class carrying its politics to other sections of the people. And that is the key question of the working class movement. The political role of the working class does not only mean protest actions against the government related to trade union demands. is trade union politics, not communist politics.

For this we have to revive our old tradition of the Communist Party going directly to the working class on its own platform on all national and international issues with the support of trade unions led by the Communist Party. Now it will have to be both the Communist Parties together and such other Communist groups as are prepared to join. So long as the communist approach to the working class is only through the trade union movement, the politicalisation of the working class in the communist sense of the term is not possible. Indeed, even the reunification of our splintered trade union movement now depends very much on raising the working class movement to a higher political level.

The rural scene has undergone a sea change, particularly in areas which have come under the Green Revolution. The semi-feudal landlord-turned-farmer and rich peasant is now, in all respects, the dominant

leading force in the countryside.

This has created very serious political problems in the rural areas. Though this section has profitted substantially as a result of the technical and financial assistance given to it by the Congress Governments after independence, its economic and political ambitions have grown even more.

It is this force that is now being organised in an aggressive manner by Sharad Joshi, Tikait and their counterparts in other States. It utilises all the weapons at its command, economic, political and the

caste factor, to further its ends.

It is not that this class has no genuine grievances against the big industrialists who also try to profiteer at his expense. But that does not alter the fact that this rural class is also an exploiter and a ruthless Digitized by Arya Samai Foundations Sherry aisabe in and class unity can be, and exploiter at that. It is the Kulak and not the old has to be very much broader. has to be, very much broader.

feudal landlord that is now the leader of rural

We, of the Left, are underestimating this danger under the plea that peasants have to be given a remunerative price for their produce. This is probably due to the fact that there are vast rural areas in which our political influence is weak and we need an ally in our electoral fight against the Congress-I. So we make electoral adjustments with political parties which represent this class-caste combination.

But that will not help to expand our mass influence in the countryside. In fact, it is leading to our traditional mass being carried away by this gentry. I

have explained this phenomenon earlier.

The development of capitalist agriculture is leading to the dispossession of a vast number of middle and poor peasants and their swelling the ranks of the

rural landless labourers.

The path of mobilising and organising this mass for land and a living wage is long and arduous. It is toilsome. But there is no other alternative for making our Kisan Sabha and Khet Mazdur Union a powerful force in the countryside. And that is the only way of building Left and democratic unity in rural India against the forces of rural reaction.

It is necessary to give serious attention to another problem which is very much interlaced with the problem of the rural poor. The Harijans (Scheduled Castes) are overwhelmingly landless and constitute a very big section of agricultural workers. The problem of uniting the common peasant with the rural labourers cannot be effectively tackled by only fighting for their economic demands.

The struggle against untouchability has to be taken up as a distinct problem and we have to fight for the social demands of the untouchables while simultaneously educating the common peasant for securing his sympathy for the removal of untouchability.

This task is not easy. But we have not recognised its importance as Gandhiji did in his days. If we do that we will achieve remarkable results because we will be combining the economic (class) struggle of the rural poor with the Harijan struggle for social

justice and equality.

Dr Ambedkar's followers raise a number of very just demands of the Dalits. The Kisan Sabha and Khet Mazdur Union have to support such demands and evolve their own ways of fighting for them: It is wrong to argue that this will divide our kisan movement. The reality is that unless the kisan movement combines both the tasks firm and stable unity of kisans and khet mazdoors cannot be built.

The canal irrigated Green Revolution areas are economically and politically important. But they constitute a very small fraction of the total cultivated land in the country. Agriculture in these areas is still dependent on the vagaries of the monsoon.

The kisan movement has to distinguish between these two areas as their problems are different.

Agriculture in the Green Revolution areas has become highly commercialised and the class conflict between the rich peasant-capitalist farmer and agricultural labourer has become very sharp. In the rainfed areas constantly facing droughts, the entire

It is in the rainfed areas that the agrarian crisis is most acute. The economy of even those who have substantial land holdings is in a serious plight due to recurrent droughts which not only ruin their crops but create a grave shortage of fodder leading to the death of tens of thousands of cattle including bullocks indispensable for agriculture and rural

transport. It is in these areas that not only poor and landless peasants but families of well-to-do and "respectable" peasants flock to the innumerable rural employment projects of the government. The implementation of these projects is corrupt and inefficient. But they are often the only source of income for the ruined

peasantry.

The Kisan Sabha must work in this mass which runs into tens of millions. Every effort must be made to improve their working conditions and secure for them the wage to which they are entitled but do not get from the fraudulent contractors under whom

they work.

Irrigation has to be carried to these areas but it is a long and slow process. Besides, there are huge areas in which canal irrigation is not possible due to topographical reasons. Drought resistant food grains and other crops have to be developed to which our agricultural institutes are still not giving the necessary attention. Fertilisers do not solve the problem of developing drought resistant strains.

Though I am dealing with it at the end, the most vital question of national unity is undoubtedly that of uniting all Left, democratic, progressive and patriotic forces against the dire threat of total anarchy and chaos created by the various divisive

forces in the country.

Whose class interest do these forces represent? Really speaking, they do not represent the long-range interest even of the exploiting classes who, after all, do need an orderly, functioning society for carry

ing on their exploitative pursuits.

They represent the interest of two sections (not classes) of society. One, the purely parasitical totally non-productive sections of the exploiting classes. Two, what are now called the anti-social elements, such as smugglers, narcotic traders, slum lords, pimps, etc. and "pure" criminals like pickpockets, robbers and professional murderers, for whom social disorder and anarchy is the best condition for the "success of their trade". There are also other anti-social alarmeters, for the best condition for anti-social alarmeters, and anarchy is the best condition for anti-social alarmeters, and anarchy is the best condition for anti-social alarmeters, and anarchy is the best condition for anti-social alarmeters, and anarchy is the best condition for anti-social alarmeters, and anarchy is the best condition for anti-social alarmeters. anti-social elements that fall in this category. And, unfortunately, it has to be recognised that numerically this "fraternity" has proliferated vastly in the recent two or three decades.

But the problem of the divisive forces would not the become so the have become so threatening if it were limited only

to such elements.

Unfortunately, among the exploitative classes, both the rich and those not so rich, there are elements who, for their shortsighted selfish interest are prepared to go to any length, resort to any means, even if it jeopardises their own long range interest.

Nothing is easier for such shortsighted people

than to whip up deep-rooted animosities based on than to the language, regionalism Aran Sanctifinite layion Cherional Caste, language, regional caste, re to provoke strife, violence, incendianism and pillage for achieving their immediate aims. And these aims are not only economic. They include power politics at all levels of national life.

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For this purpose slogans like "Hinduism in linger." "Islam in danger", "Panthic unity in danger, "threat to language and culture", "sons of the soil", "backward castes versus upper castes", etc. are most handy for inciting strife and violence.

But when such fire spreads all over the country, the result is that the entire country is set on fire, threatening not only democracy and national integrity, but the very foundation of the social fabric of the country.

This is what is happening in India today. This is the meaning of the danger of the divisive forces, of all separatist, revivalist, obscurantist, communal, chauvinist, secessionist forces in the country.

Naturally, among all such forces those based on religion, Hindu, Muslim or Sikh, are the most powerful and most dangerous. And among them, Hindu communalism is the primary danger, representing as it does the communalism of the majority community, which is also economically and politically, the dominant community in India.

If the situation continues to deteriorate as in recent years, the problem before the country will be one of utter anarchy and fragmentation, literally a problem of survival or death as an united national entity.

That is why, fundamentally, what national unity means today is the unity of all patriotic, healthy forces against the divisive forces of national disruption and ruin.

The divisive forces are the enemy number one of the country.

And it is these forces that are now the main ally of imperialism, US imperialism in particular. It is they that offer a mass base for imperialist conspiracies of destabilising and dismembering the country.

The question of who in the country are the allies and agents of imperialism is undoubtedly a key question. Generally, we speak of the feudals and monopolists as those who collude with imperialism. I have discussed this question earlier. But the last forty years have proved that the economic, political and, diplomatic pressures exercised on India by imperialism through such elements have failed to bring India under its grip. The economic and political independence of the country has been strengthened despite such manoeuvers and intrigues.

If the imperialists have to succeed in their sinister aims they need a mass base in the country. Top manoeuvers do not suffice.

It is the various separatist, disruptive, divisive forces that provide the mass base.

That is why these forces, in collusion with imperialism, are the worst enemies of the country. And national unity, first and foremost, means the unity of all the of all those who love India, who want India to sur-

vive and advance, against these fratricidal forces of a vast Lebanon. We cannot and must not allow it.

When all these various anti-national forces are considered together, I would say that what India needs today is unity of all patriotic forces against the forces of foreign and internal reaction. And this unity will need a Left, socialist orientation since basically, the vicious, disruptive forces thrive on mass misery and unemployment, and the problem of hunger and starvation cannot be solved without giving our economy a socialist orientation.

The need is of patriotic unity with a socialist orientation.

I have deliberately put the issue in simple, popular language. If it is to be put in scientific terminology I would say that India needs the unity of all forces that stand for peace, national unity and integrity, secularism, democracy, and a self-reliant, growing economy combined with a constant improvement of popular living standards, against imperialism and its internal allies and accomplices.

The building of such unity necessitates a vast amount of constant mass education on all the burning problems of the country and their correct democratic solution. It needs movements on a variety of issues and with a variety of forms.

It wil certainly include the various mass movements that we of the Left are leading today. But, it will also include a variety of other movements on other issues. Further, while it will include movements against such policies of the Congress-I Government as are anti-people or make concessions to foreign and internal reaction, it will also include movements which cut across the division between the ruling and the non-ruling bourgeois parties.

In a word, the aim has to be to build the broadest, popular national unity on a programme of national consensus which will bring together all our progressive forces against all the forces of reaction. (To be continued)

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DISCUSSION

EMS on Nationalism and Socialism

SHARAD PATIL

E.M.S. Namboodiripad, General Secretary of the CPI-M, presented a paper on "Indian Nationalism and World Socialism" at a meeting held in New Delhi under the aegis of the Krishna Menon Society on March 27, 1989. The paper was published in Mainstream (April 8, 1989) to stimulate a discussion. Alok Bhowmick expressed himself on the paper in Mainstream (May 6, 1989). This is another contribution on the subject. - Editor

E. M.S. NAMBOODIRIPAD's paper has appeared in Mainstream (April 8, 1989). The paper, from its title and content, falls into two parts: Indian nationalism and world socialism. I was in the 'official' communist movement from 1946 to 1978. Up to EMS' appointment as the General Secretary of the CPI-M, the official communist movement had preserved the essential characteristic of democratic centralism and that meant that the decisions of the majority were carried out by the minority. It seems EMS himself is contravening it repeatedly and consciously.

When the General Secretary of a Communist Party takes a line, it is understood that it is the official line of that party. Two official lines on the 1942 struggle have been taken by two General Secretaries of the CPI-M. Which is the official one? The late General Secretary of the CPI-M, P. Sundarayya, says in his classic work Telengana

Peoples Struggle and Its Lessons (1972):

It was in December 1941 that the Communist Party came out with its assessment of the new situation, six months

after Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union.

.How to reconcile the two-fold task, of doing everything to see that the Soviet Union and its war-time allies won the war against Hitler and at the same time, to wrench freedom from the hands of British imperialists? It was this dilemma that faced the Party, and it came out with the analysis and line of action.

The war ...had become a people's war...So all out support to the war to aid the victory of the Soviet Union, campaign for the formation of a national government which alone could enthusiastically mobilise the Indian people to

back up the war effort.

But...our Party should have actively participated in the struggle against British refusal to form a national government by real transfer of power and against its resorting to repression. While at the same time we could have continued our campaign of educating our fighting people not to be dragged into support of Hitler's and Japanese war but preparing them to resist them...

It was this wrong and one-sided emphasis of our Party on the need to strengthen the anti-fascist war effort, and also the Party's wrong emphasis on the right of self-deterimination without simultaneously fighting the separatist slogan of Pakistan, that alienated our Party from many anti-imperialist sections and youth in our country. They took our slogans and activities as subordinating our freedom struggle to the needs of Soviet defence and our advocacy of self-determination as one of supporting the division and disruption of Indian unity. (pp. 23-25)

The book is the official publication of the CPI-M,

Sundarayya was alive for several years after his place was taken by EMS' as the General Secretary of the CPI-M. No rebuttal of Sundarayya's line, especially on 1942, was issued by the CPI-M leadership up to his death. And then came EMS' book A History of Indian Freedom Struggle in 1986. It reverted to the old line of the united CPI as follows:

.....The Communist Party did not give in even after the adoption of the 'Quit India' resolution by the AICC. The Party continued to hold that it was suicidal to launch the 'Quit India' struggle in a manner that would obstruct the war efforts of the Allied powers

including the Soviet Union. ...

Despite the omissions and commissions, the Party adopted a policy which was by and large correct during the 'Quit India' struggle..... (Pp. 768, 773)

In the paper under discussion EMS goes to the extent of justifying the old line by arguing that India could become free not through the solution of the internal contradiction of British imperialism versus the Indian people, but through the solution of the external contradiction:

Subsequent events show the correctness or otherwise of the two approaches to the question. Was it the intensity of the 'Quit India' struggle, or the international repercussions of Soviet victory in the anti-fascist war, together with the wave of militant mass struggles that broke out at the end of war that for the end of war that the e at the end of war, that forced Britain to quit India on August 15, 1947? To put this question is to answer it.

Capitalist newspapers alleged on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of Indian independence that Indian Communists betrayed the 1942 struggle of independence, to rebut which C. Rajeswara Rao, General Secretary of the CPI, wrote an article in New Age, in which he justified the old line exactly in the manner of EMS. (I have before me the Marathi translation of the article in Yugantar, September 7, 1987). But it should be noted that a section of the CPI, led by S.A. Dange, had put for ward a line similar to that of P. Sundarayya. No infalliability can be attributed to any section of individual leader of any of the two Communist Parties. The point is that neither of these CPs has thrown this problem to open debate. I have gone on record in my reviews of EMS' above-mentioned book in Satyashodhak Marx-vadi (March 1987) that the united CPI committed a serious mistake in not participating in the 1942 struggle. I espoused this line long before the publication of Sundarayya's book.

place. The claim of the CPI leaders like EMS and Rajeswara Rao can be vindicated only after such a debate.

EMS is trying to play down the crisis in the Soviet Union on one hand and his party is putting up a sophisticated defence of Stalin on the other. The CPSU has thrown open the discussion on their crisis for all the well-wishers of socialism world over, while EMS wants to mute it under the pretext of communist fraternalism, which becomes evident from the following passage in his paper:

Of late, however, the rate of growth in socialist countries has been showing down in some lines like the development and practical use of science and technology, the key to further development. Capitalism is showing a more credible record than socialism in certain respects. There has in fact been what is called a certain amount of stagnation in the development of socialism; unless this is broken, world socialism cannot win its historic battle against world capitalism.

Note that EMS considers the crisis to be of world socialism. Gorbachev wants to solve it within the framework of Marxism-Leninism through the slogans of glasnost and perestroika and by accomplishing the socialist democratic revolution which no text book of Marxism-Leninism ever visualised. Traditional Communist Parties world over devoutly believe like the CPSU that a little more digging into Marxism-Leninism will yield the answer!

(1) Glasnost has taken democracy within the party and within the socialist society beyond the bounds set by democratic centralism and 'proletarian' democracy respectively. Practice has proved that the prevailing concept of democracy within the Communist Party and socialist society is unhistorical and non-dialectical. Is the CPSU going to redefine party democracy and socialist democracy? I had to redefine both these democracies in the context of the anti-

caste democratic revolution in India.

(2) We used to proudly propagate that the Soviet Union, and for that matter all socialist countries, have done away with economic crisis, unemployment, corruption, crime and prostitution. Now even EMS says that 'capitalism is showing a more credible record than socialism in some respects'. All the evils of capitalism still thrive in the Soviet Union, even organised crime. More than seventy years have passed, and the new socialist man is still not in sight. The contradiction between the new society and the old man has unleashed a sort of a general crisis in Soviet society which can only be resolved through the society which can only be resolved. through the socialist democratic revolution. This is a revolution not visualised by any of the Marxist there. According to the well-known maxim there can be revolution without a revolutionary theory, the new revolution in question needs a higher revolutionary theory. Theory here means

chev does not bell the cat for fear of being denounced as a renegade, revisionist, etc. The general crisis of the Soviet society has revealed

philosophy. Higher development of Marxist philosophy is an arrival of the south of

sophy is the pressing need of the hour. But Gorba-

I am prepared to expand it if any such debates the best and diction is a substitute of the Marxist philosophy. Contradiction is an all pervasive law of dialectics and Marxist philosophy cannot be free from it. The main contradiction in Marxist philosophy is between its reflectionist epistemology which it has taken over from mechanical materialism and the materialist dialectics which it espouses. It is a contradiction between a non-dialectical theory of knowledge and a dialectical philosophy.

Reflectionist theory, as becomes evident from three quarters of a century of Soviet practice, has enabled change only of the outer reality which is 'reflected' in the mind. It is a change achieved by consciousness. But the mind itself being composed of consciousness and sub-consciousness, the instruments of knowledge furnished by reflectionism are unable to probe the sub-conscious recesses of the mind. Hence, this contradiction can be solved only replacing the reflectionist epistemology by dialectical epistemology. I have dealt with this problem in my as yet unpublished paper 'Conflict Between the Reflectionist Epistemology of Marxist Philosophy and the Dialectical Aquisition of Knowledge' (1982).

(3) The Stalin phenomenon is being analysed in the Soviet Union through all means of modern knowledge except philosophy. This may sound queer For have they not got their Maxism-Leninism? But cataclysmic contradictions have arisen in the law of antagonistic and non-antagonistic contradictions. Though Marx was a little cautious, Lenin had unambiguously declared that there will be no antagonistic contradictions in a socialist society. The Leninist Stalin averred that class struggle will intensify in the Soviet society and on the strength of it went ahead with his repressive crusade. Gorbachev has now sounded the drums for an unprecedented revolution: the socialist democratic revolution.

Marx had not clinched the definition of class. Lenin clinched it by saying that classes are related to the ownership or non-ownership of the instruments of production and went on to say that on this criterion there will be no classes in a socialist society. But Gorbachev lays down in the new programme of the CPSU that three classes exist in the Soviet society, namely the working class, the intelligentsia and the collective farmers. This identification of class goes against the Leninist definition of class. The CFSU has, up till now, paid no attention to this contradiction, that is, the Leninist definition of class and the CPSU's understanding of 'socialist' class. If this understanding continues, inspite of Gorbachev's sobriety, it may again pull the CPSU into the vortex of Stalin's conception of class struggle in a socialist society.

(4) The contradictions in the Soviet society during Stalin's and Brezhnev's periods had turned into antagonistic contradictions, which means that contradictions even in a socialist society can turn into antagonistic ones. Lenin's understanding that class contradiction is the only antagonistic contradiction while the rest are non-antagonistic and they do not turn into each other but exist in water-tight compartments has been proved to be incorrect. Mao, who was the first person to postulate that these two

proved to be correct.

The CPI-M leadership had a vested interest in. the Leninist hypothesis of these two types of contradictions, for, if Mao's formulation is accepted, then caste contradiction also will have to be treated as antagonistic, and antagonistic contradiction being the sole revolutionary contradiction, caste contradiction also will have to be solved in a revolutionary manner. That is why M. Basupun-

naiah, a Polit-Bureau member of the CPI-M types of contradictions do not exist in water-tight naiah, a Polit-Bureau member of the CPI-M compartments but turn into each other has been robust. Mao's interpretation of these true to rebut Mao's interpretation of these two types of contradictions.

The editor of the magazine had called for a debate on it. I was the only person to participate in it; but, as usual, my paper Lenin, Mao and Basavapunnaiah on Contradiction: Antagonistic and Non-antagonistic' was not published by the Social-Scientist: This is how non-antagonistic contradiction in a fraternal debate is turned into antagonistic contradiction!

Namibia on Path of Independence

NEENA GOEL

THE process of historic transition to independence for Namibia, Africa's last colony, has begun from April 1, 1989 with the arrival of UN peace keeping troops and officials to supervise the dismantling of South Africa's apartheid laws, withdrawl of South African troops and conduct of elections for the formation of a Constituent Assembly seven months from now. In short, implementation of the tripartite accord signed on December 22, 1988 at the UN headquarters in New York for Namibian independence, between South Africa, Angola and Cuba in fulfilment of the UN Security Council Resolution 435 of 1978 has been set in motion. The South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) led by Sam Nujoma that waged a bitter bush war for more than two decades, is tipped to win the November 1 elections and form the first independent Government in Namibia which would pave the way for total independence on April 1, 1990.

Independence for Namibia would be the culmination of the process of decolonisation which began after the Second World War. This colony, earlier called South West Africa, has been under South African control since the First World War when South Africa was given a mandate by the League of Nations in 1920. This mandate was subsequently revoked in 1946 but South Africa refused to recognise the UN trusteeship. The UN declared the continued occupation of Namibia by South Africa to be illegal in 1968 but Pretoria ignored repeated World Court rulings that it was governing the country illegally. In fact, South Africa constantly flouted UN directives for an early Namibian inde-

pendence.

According to the accord, apart from Namibian independence, the Cuban troops would also be leaving Angola in phases, half of them by November 1, 1989 when Namibia is to hold its first free elections. The linkage of these two issues was the last of the far-fetched excuses for South Africa's occupation of Namibia. South Africa had, in the past, on one pretext or the other, always managed to delay the independence of Namibia. But due to worldwide pressure it had become increasingly difficult for Western nations to ignore any longer the call for economic sanctions against South Africa. South Africa had also realised that they could perhaps get the best deal only under Reagan Administration, Thus coupled with the help given by Cuba and the Soviet Union to the Angolan armed forces resulting

and the changed international climate - especially the US-Soviet detente - forced South Africa to

come to the negotiating table.

But, beneath the veneer of calm a storm is brewing. The question in everyone's mind is whether the people of Namibia and Angola will really get a chance to live in peace with freedom. For unlike the withdrawal of Britain and France from India and Indo-China respectively, South Africa does not withdraw thousands of kilometres away but retreats only next door. Pretoria can still manipulate the newly independent state whose economy will continue to depend heavily on that of South Africa. Moreover, after having been forced to withdraw its troops, Pretoria is now focussing on efforts to influence the November 1 elections to deny a two-thirds majority to the SWAPO, for if it does not, numerous smaller parties and alliances will become power-brokers and restrain Nujoma's room for manoeuvre. As the odds are heavily against the SWAPO, a mere token UN presence may not do. It is also not known about what role will be assigned in future to the South African paramilitary organisation SWATF and the notorious 'Koevoet' police force as South Africa may still retain its influence in Namibia through its armed might and ideological warfare. The issue of Walvis Bay which South Africa claims to be a part of Cape Province also remains unresolved.

However, the picture may not entirely be all that gloomy. For one, the SWAPO has created a more or less natural organisation out of so many tribal components and carried out a relentless struggle against the mighty White regime. UN organisations have also given training to the Namibian people in education, health, etc. which may prove to be helpful after Namibia becomes free. The overall impact of the accord and its implementation may be per ceived by the Blacks as their victory over the racial White minority regime, whereas, it may demoralise the Right-wing apartheid groups.

The most important of the positive signs of the success is that South Africa is feeling the impact of economic sanction. economic sanctions through its mounting external debts, declining foreign investments, social unrest in Black townships and breaking-up of the White public opinion. The public opinion. The road to independence for Namibia has not be Namibia has not been easy and the onus is on the United National United Nations and the two superpowers to ensure in repeated defeats for the South African troops that the entire independence process proceeds according disillusionment among the White soldiers their long awaited for the Namibian people secure their long awaited freedom.

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Role of ITU for Global Telecom Development

GAUTAM CHATTERJEE

O^N May 17, 1865, a configuration of twenty nations met at Paris and founded the first inter-governmental organisation—International Telegraph Union which was later renamed in the twentieth century

as International Telecommunication Union.

The first electric telegraphy was used in 1837 and within twelve years telegraph was utilised for international purposes in 1849. Since then the pioneers who started sending telegrams across the geo-political houndaries realised that some kind of international agreement was necessary to regulate smooth working of telegraph. Thus ITU was set up which adopted the first Telegraph Convention and Regulations in 1865.

Before long, in 1876, the telephone was invented and then at the close of the 19th century, radio came into vogue. Both these revolutionary inventions soon got international acknowledgement and were recognised as vital communication media on a global scale. The need was felt for standardisation of telegraph traffic between countries. So the International Telegraph Union was formed. It has since then developed and shouldered the responsibility for the planping of telecommunications, coordination amongst the Member countries and has played the role of a regulatory authority for implementing its resolutions and conventions. It set the criteria for standardisa-tion from tariff to traffic and paved the path of world-wide telecommunications growth!

All these were started in the days of the League of Nations. With the ushering in of United Nations, ITU augmented its scope and in 1954 signed an agreement to participate in the United Nations Technical Cooperation programme, in order to assist the development efforts of new member-states through the expansion of an International Telecommunica-tion network. Today International Telecommunica-tion Union has 163 members and functions as a specialised account of the Hard Nations devoted to specialised agency of the United Nations, devoted to

the cause of world-wide telecom development. Going back to its history, the first Conference of International Telegraph Union was held in Paris in 1865 which was the first Plenipotentiary or Diplomatic Conference and subsequently it was held in Vienna in 1868. At the Vienna Conference the major achievement was that Persia and India were admitted as members of the Union. India was represented by Great Reits of the Union. Great Britain although not herself yet a member of the Iln: the Union as Great Britain did not have a national ised telegraph as the Rome ised telegraph service. However in 1871 at the Rome Conference of ITU, Great Britain could become a qualified mamber of the basing nationalised her telequalified member after having nationalised her tele-graph same graph service. Furthermore at the Vienna Plenipotentiary Conference, ITU had decided to set up a permanent Bureau, charged with the routine administrative Work Park trative work of the Union. The Bureau was head-quartered: of the Union. The Bureau was headquartered in Berne in Switzerland from 1868 to 1948.

May 17 was the World Communication Day.

It then moved to Geneva and became the present general secretariat of the International Telecommunication Union.

The Plenipotentiary or Diplomatic Conferences of ITU have since its inception remained the supreme body of the Union which drafts the Conventions of the Union, its basic charter and lays down its guiding policies until the next conference. Furthermore it reviews the Union's work since the last conference. It also controls the budget and expenditure of the Union. This supreme body meets about every five

With the ushering in of United Nations, ITU enlarged its scope and functionary organs were enhanced. At the Atlantic City Conference of 1947 an Administrative Council was created which would meet every year and monitor the work of the Union. council has 36 Members elected by the Plenipotentiary Conference and takes care of the progress of the Union and in course reports it to the next Plenipotentiary Conference.

Since 1868 ITU had a permanent Director at the head of its affairs. At the 1947 Conference, the post of Secretary General and his deputy were created along the lines of United Nations, who are to supervise the overall working of the Union.

Initially, International Telephone Consultative Committee (CCIT) was created and later the International Telegraph Consultative Committee. Later on, these two were merged into a giant body called International Telegraph and Telephone Committee (CCITT). It considered the study of telegraph distortion, standardisation of voice frequency in regard to Telegraphs and Telephones, it further established the telegraph alphabet which was to be internationally utilised.

In 1927, ITU established a permanent body, the International Radio Consultative Committee (CCIR) to study and issue recommendations on the technical operating questions relating to radio communications. Today CCIR's recommendations cover nearly every domain of the use of radio technology, including radio relay system in telecom networks, satellite systems for communications, radio and television broadcasting and mobile services such as maritime, aeronautical and land vehicle mobile communication.

India has all along been actively associated with the work of three bodies. India on the one hand contributes to the global scientific development and on the other hand identifies the area of complexities which are being faced by the developing countries considering its limited resources. Thus India has given the much-needed leadership to the developing world especially to the countries of the Asia-Pacific

In 1928, the International Frequency Registration Board was established whose main task is to decide what Frequency is assigned to which country and vital role in which is a pointer when the Missing its time of operation from a particular radio stations. Thus with the coming up IFRB every country sends their need for frequency allocation and IFRB considers the case. If the Board finds the frequency power and time operations is not interfering with any other countries' existing operation then IFRB issues the notification and the frequency is registered in the Master International Frequency Register

against the country. With the ushering in of space age telecommunication through satellite became very important. Vertically high above the equator at a height of approximately 36,000 Kms the imaginary Geo-Stationary Satellite Orbit (GSO) is locable. From this strategic GSO one third of earth's surface is visible. Thus by positioning any satellite in this orbit, one can telecommunications, point-to-point Metereological Services, Maritime Mobile Services and Television Broadcasting. A satellite missioned to remain in GSO is a rare non-renewable resource, which has to be explored by collective calculable

measures considering the wider nature of implications and complication.

Thus the developed countries who pondered over the GSO placement of satellite started grabbing the slots in GSO. Soon most of the vital slots which are relevant and vital for some country or other became the prerogative of the developed countries. And slots were allotted to those countries on the first come first serve basis'. Thus its developing countries became the sufferers as they were lacking technologically. But when these countries developed their technology they found there was no place to position their own satellite. Thus the developed countries started ruling the GSO. India started fighting especially for the Indian Ocean zone which is relevant to us and all the countries around the ocean. After prolonged confrontration India could ultimately have its say and today any developing country can get allocated the slot even twenty years in advance. Thus its developed countries could no longer control all the slots of the GSO. And today developing countries do not have to wait till their updating of space technology as they can book the slot in advance through its registration in International Frequency Registration Board.

Thus the continuous effort of International Tele-communication Union has yielded many a positive result and it has brought the global scientific community of the world to the same platform of telecommunication development. In the ITU history, a lot of scientific revolution had taken place and today messages can reach thousands of kilometers within seconds thus telecommunication had made the world shorter. However as the developed countries advanced to the computarised space age communication system of many countries still hold on to the obsolete telecom facilities, for ever. Thus a gap was created and the developed countries had left the developing countries behind by a hundred years. To bridge the gap an Independent Commission was created under the Chairmanship of Dr. Maitland wherein Dr. S. Chakroborty, former Economic Advisor of the late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi played the

Link — a publication which is a pointer where the developed countries should help the developing countries! The report of Dr. Donald Maitland said that "practical field training ... ensures the full benefit it gained from investments already made ... We consider the development aid for telecommunication cations in the developing countries should aim first and foremost to train manpower".

Moreover, R.E. Butler the Secretary General has thrown some light on the obstacles of telecom development in the developing countries: "The main obstacle to the development of Telecommunications network in many countries is the lack of qualified staff. For small countries with modest resources. it is often difficult to finance the type of specialised training required for by telecommunications"

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ITU for the last two decades has been giving a special thrust to the need for training. Today within the network of ITU there are forty main training centres. This list includes India's Advanced Level Telecom Training' Centre of Ghaziabad. All these international training centres have mostly national staff capable of providing fixed training in the basic techniques. In the last decade these centres had organised 300 courses in 70 countries which has trained 1000 course designers who will in course open up indigenous training programmes for their respective countries. In 1984 the Technical Cooperation Development of ITU implemented projects for a value of \$ 23.6 millions. It sent 477 experts into the field which included many Indian personnel. ITU awarded 629 fellowships and spent \$ 4,004,819 for the purchase of equipment, and was given 170 projects to implement. The Independent Commission of ITU urged at the Arusha session that "in the name of common humanity and on grounds of common interest" the correction of the imbalance in the distribution of telecommunications and, so that the objective could be attained that "by the early part of the next century all mankind should be within easy reach of a talk to "" within easy reach of a telephone".

In India 540,000 villages are still without direct access to a telephone network, while millions are on the waiting list for getting a telephone connection. Thus with the recommendations of the ITU Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi said at a recent ITU conference in New Delhi: "We have geared our objectives to our needs. Our overall target is to put the entire population of 800,000,000 to within five minutes walking distance of the telecom." Although this sounds an ambitious target, India can fulfill the target to provide one public paid phone in each of is

570,000 villages.

India today has organised resources and ample trained personnel and is out to achieve the target as the Centre for Developments of Telematics (C-Dot) headed by Sam Pitroda is in the final stages of developing the developing the indigenous Telephone Exchange RAX which will work which will work with solar power and need not require an aircondition require an aircondition plant to cool the indigenous exchange. Thus India will soon become self reliant in many telecom equipment and telephone exchanges which are destined which are destined to being about the realisation of the objective Rajiv Gandhi mentioned.

BOOK REVIEW

The Endangered Species

J.M. KAUL

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P.N. HAKSAR: OUR TIMES AND THE MAN: Bidyut Sarkar, editor (Allied, Delhi, 1989; pp. 228; Rs. 125)

To portray a personality that has so many different facets, a life that has encompassed so many different fields of activity, a mind that has gleaned the riches from so many different branches of knowledge would have been beyond the ability of a single individual. It has needed all the efforts of well over a score (twenty six to be exact) of the country's leading scholars and civil servants, diplomats and planners, scientists and captains of industry, journalists and literary men, not to speak of a number of performers of the fine arts, to give an idea of the life and the achievements of P.N. Haksar. For a loan reviewer to attempt to sum up or even to provide the reader with a bird's eye view of the diversity of thought and material contained in this volume is no easy task.

It is perhaps as a distinguished civil servant who had a hand in the shaping of the country's foreign as well as domestic policies over a period spanning three decades that P.N. Haksar is best known. But to say merely that would be to say very little about him. Arthur Gavshon, the distinguished journalist who was formerly chief diplomatic correspondent of the Associated Press gives an idea of the range of Haksar's interests. "Haksar for me," says Gavshon, "always has been more than the cool diplomat, the complete political sophisticate, the embodiment of moral man. Even while remaining the lucid teacher he never stopped being the thinking scholar... He has remained in the mainstream of Indian, European and in fact international intellectual thought since his student days in the London of the 1930s. He trained as a barrister but also read science and economics, mastered mathematics and the great Bronislaw Malinowski wanted him to become an

men and governments, the condition of the people of India and governments, the condition of the people of India and beyond, and the affairs of nations are part of a whole and he knows much about all of them". Writing on Haksar vis-a-vis India's Foreign Policy, Dwarkanath Chatterjee, once India's Ambassador to France France, states that "it was Nehru who brought Haksan States that "it was Nehru who brought Haksar from the bar to the newly constituted Foreign Service Service...PNH found it easy to admire and follow Nehru because, like some other kindred souls, he shared because, like some other kindred souls, he Shared in the main Nehru's ideas and ideals. But if Nehru was his mentor, PNH was never an unques-

anthropologist. For him science and technology,

law and history, music and the arts, the motives of

tioning pupil".

G, Parthasarathi, who was at one time Chairman Policy Planning Committee in the Ministry of External Affairs, refers to Haksar's "sense of history" and of his understanding of "the evolution of India in the context of the changes that are taking place in the world". He also speaks of Haksar's integrated view of nation-building and development, on a democratic and socialistic basis and foreign policy which are all parts of national policy."

But it was perhaps in the management of events leading to the emergence of Bangladesh that Haksar's skill and wisdom are best seen. Says H.Y. Sharada Prasad who had occasion to watch from close quarters the functioning of Haksar: "He was one of the principal shapers of Indira Gandhi's Bangladesh policy". He goes on to describe how he "gauged the public mood in East Pakistan, understood the importance of linguistic loyalty as an antidote to religious fanaticism, supervised the collation of intelligence and coordination with the Defence machine, counselled his principal against yielding to the taunts of opponents and the pleadings of colleagues for premature intervention, assisted in the treaty with the Soviet Union, and above all, prepared the blueprint for Indira Gandhi's tour of Western capitals". With regard to this tour, Sharada Prasad expresses the view that "historians will, at some time, recognise it as one of India's major diplomatic achievements".

But let no one get the idea that foreign policy was the one arena in which P.N. Haksar excelled. T.N. Kaul, who was himself one of India's most distinguished diplomats and foreign affairs specialists, says that "Haksar really came into his own when he was appointed Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission with Cabinet rank". He points out that Haksar's views and suggestions were valuable and more often than not he succeeded in persuading the political leadership at the Centre and in the States. Kaul goes on to speak of Haksar's deep grasp of the social, economic, political and cultural problems and of his perceptive vision. "He speaks in the larger framework of India's history, tradition and potentiality. His contribution as Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission is indeed very

great" Y.K. Alagh, currently a member of the Planning Commission, in his contribution to this volume refers to P.N. Haksar as "one of those charmed individuals who has become a legend in his lifetime". Alagh' expounds some of his own ideas on the nature of development that India needs and in doing so reveals how deeply he was influenced by Haksar. He concludes his essay with the words: "To use reason and to create social and state power, so that the average Indian becomes the power of the future, is what Haksar has been involved in Raw power, whether that of the colonial hangover of the police, the comprador, or those who would push us into a logic which is not of our own making, will not succeed in India. That is the logic Haksar has

always stood for".

Director of the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology and Fellow of several science bodies points out that a true scientist is not only one who has a degree or formal training in an area of science, but one who understands what the method is that science uses to acquire knowledge, what the attributes of this knowledge are, and what the nature and structure of the value system is that the practice of science generates. "One such person", declares Bhargava, "that our country has produced was Jawaharlal Nehru. Another is P.N. Haksar."

But this man of science was at the same time a man of arts. K.S. Duggal, litterateur and former Director of the National Book Trust, in his tribute contests P.N. Haksar's own disclaimer about being "neither a writer nor an artist". Describing him as a fine writer, ("even his remarks on official files, at times, read like oracles"), he cites quite a few examples of his vision and his perception in the promotion of arts and letters. Referring to a decision of the Ministry of Culture inviting Haksar to lead a commission to review the functioning of the three national academies - Sahitya Akademi, Lalit Kala Akademi and Sangeet Natak Akademi - he says: "My conviction is that there could be no better choice and under Haksar's guidance we are going to have a meaningful direction in the realm of arts and letters."

But behind the achievements in particular spheres of activity stands the man, a character and a personality that has influenced two, perhaps three generations of the country's leading intellectuals. It is to the mettle of the man that Nikhil Chakravartty, well known journalist and columnist, refers in his contribution. "When he returned home in 1967", writes Nikhil Chakravartty, "Haksar found himself face to face with happenings which changed the very face of Indian politics. It was in this phase one saw the

In an open letter to Haksar, Pushpa M. Bhargava, mettle of the personsibility of running a general strusted with the responsibility of running a general staff in mighty battles both at home and abroad, but equally importantly, later on when he could watch developments unfold but he was in no position to intervene. These were the years of his greatness as much in office as outside the red-stone ramparts of power." Pointing out that Haksar in his outlook on life and practice has always combated crass determinism and has never failed to emphasise the role of consciousness, he speaks of Haksar's "abiding faith in the moral triumph of mankind along with its material advance".

> It is again to the moral stature of the man that S. Gopal, well-known historian and biographer of Jawaharlal Nehru refers when he pays tribute to Haksar. "He is one of the few outstanding figures of present-day India. Without holding public office and spending over 50 years in the civil service, he has influenced policy for the better and helped very many of his fellow citizens to think and act on the right lines. Of a rare few, with a career like his. can this be said anywhere and at any time".

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This collection of twenty-six essays, referred to by its editor, Bidyut Sarkar, as a festschrift, on the occasion of P.N. Haksar's seventy-fifth birthday consists of two parts. In the first part each of the areas of Haksar's main concerns of the present and the future is discussed by authors who have distinguished themselves in that particular field. The second part features a more personalised aspect of Haksar's work and philosophy and concludes with a final essay by Mulk Raj Anand in the form of an open letter to P.N. Haksar. In their totality they bring before us a profile of one of the outstanding personalities of our generation, Reading these essays one realises that P.N. Haksar belongs to a rare species that is, alas, rapidly getting extinct.

M.V. Kamath: Role of Religion (Contd. from page 10)

level - than in India. Most Islamic states are frankly Islamic: there is no comparison between them and India. In Saudi Arabia, for instance, the government will not even let a Sikh gurudwara to be built. India is far too civilised, even if it is claimed that this civility is imposed on it by history and the conspiracy of circumstances. For all that a predominantly Hindu parliament has stuck to the Constitution through good times and bad. We have adhered to secularism and will continue, hopefully, to adhere to it in the decades to come., not only because it would be politically expedient but because it is in the nature of our being.

There are, at least two senses in which the word 'secularism' is used. In one sense secularism connotes a philosophy and a mental orientation which holds that no supernatural power interferes with the affairs of the world.

The other sense of secularism is parked the world.

one. It has, as Justice V.M. Tarkunde has noted (Radical Humanist, October 1988) the background of a long historical development. From about the 12th century AD, Europe went through the Renaissance Movement which spanned several centuries. It was a Movement against the domination of the Christian Church and the priestly class. It was essentially

a humanist movement which progressively secularised European society. By encouraging this-worldly view of life, it opened the way for the growth of science. By blasting the theory of the Division Plants of the progressively secularised of the progressively secularised by the progressively secular theory of the Divine Right of Kings, it laid the foundation of modern liberal democracy. It also paved the way for the Reformation and a long struggle between the secular power of the State and the continued to the Church There of the State and the spiritual power of the Church. There was eventually an uneasy truce between the State and the Church and the result was the concept of the secular state.

Justice Tarkunda forest Justice Tarkunde further pointed out that secularism assumes a dichotomy in human life between the sacred and the secular. Religion was confined to the sacred aspect of human life and the secular aspect the secular aspect was taken care of by institutions like the State.

The Indian Constitution is essentially secular because it provides freedom of religion (both individual and corporate), non-discrimination because it corporate). non-discrimination between different religions and non intervention of the State in vention of the State in religious affairs extend to the extend specified in the Constitution.

There is a difference of opinion in India in regard to the meaning of even the limited concept of a secular state. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan observation Radhakrishnan observed that a secular state on the gives equal status for all religions. That reduces the definition to an absurdity in that the State cannot possibly give equal support to all religions while making financial grants is a more tenable definition is that the State shall do nothing to promote any one religion, directly or otherwise. American Constitution clearly lays down this principle. It is also consistent with the relevant provisions of the Indian also consistent with the relevant provisions of the Indian Constitution.

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Moscow's New Japan Policy ZHANG YAOHUA

CINCE Mikhail Gorbachev took office as Soviet leader four years ago, the USSR's policy and attitude towards Japan has changed, leading to an upgrading of diplomatic relations with Japan. The then rookie leader, Gorbachev, had put forward a new diplomatic line rejecting the old world view of there being only two poles of global influence.

Gorbachev holds that the political and economic relations among the capitalist countries that were formed after World War II shifted at the end of the

1970s and in the early years of the 1980s.

The obvious change is the decline in the former US dominance over world politics and economics.

The US clout has also been outpaced by a reconstructed world that sees Japan and Western European as new centres of world forces.

IN numerous speeches after he took office, Gorbachev has stated his intention of developing Soviet relations with Japan.

To build new bridges with Japan, the Soviet Union has invited many Japanese politicians to visit the Soviet Union. Among these are Takako Doi, chairman of the Japanese Socialist Party, Eitaro Itoyama, chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives and former Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone.

At the same time, the Soviet Union also dispatched many delegations to Japan for visits and to

open new ties.

In recent years, the Soviet Union has played down its military might or any hostile diplomatic action towards the Japanese. Even the topic of the Kurile seems open for negotiation and change.

In the past, Moscow ignored Japanese demands for a return of these islands and even tabooed talks

with the Japanese government on the issue. With a set of new proposals put forward by scholars on how to handle the Kurile question, now the two countries can sit together to discuss the issue despite the Soviet Union not officially admitting that there is even a territorial issue between the two

One such plan proposes joint rule of the islands, with neither side enjoying sovereignty over the area.

Another wide enjoying sovereignty over the area. Another solution places the Kuriles under UN trusteeship while allowing both sides to share territorial source. torial sovereignty over the islands but vests administrative right with the UN.

These are some plans put forward by the Soviet scholars to sound out the Japanese.

This article is reproduced from Beijing Review (May 1-7, 1989).

To promote its economic and technological links, the Soviet Union is opening cities and planning to set up special economic regions for the Japanese. They are also relaxing the issuance of commercial visas to Japanese businessmen whom they eye as being their future partners.

In yet another area, the Soviet Academy of Sciences is setting up a Far East branch with a special

focus on Japan.

The greatest indicator of this new Soviet approach is in the mililary. While scaling down criticism of Japan, it has even proposed holding consultations with Japan on military affairs. Moscow has gone as far as indicating its willingness to even agree upon unilateral declaration of maneuvers in the strategic area.

Behind Moscow's urgency to improve relations with Japan are a series of factors that range from the need to develop her economy to a push for stronger

influence in East Asia.

The Soviet Union requires a peaceful international environment to accelerate its economic development while holding onto the title of super-

Moscow's opening move came with its new links with China. With its Japan file sorted out Moscow knows a peaceful era in the Far East will prevail. Japan's gross national product has reached US \$ 2,000 billion which vastly outdistances the Soviet Union. With Japan's ranking as an economic and technical giant, the Soviet Union urgently needs a Japanese transfusion to bolster up its antiquated

In March 1988, the Soviet Union established a committee in charge of developing economic rela-

tions with the Asian and Pacific countries.

As part of its new Asia and Pacific region policy, the Soviet Union has been stressing paticipation in various modes of Asian and Pacific economic cooperation. The Soviets know that if Japan stands in its way, Soviet efforts of extending influence and obtaining economic benefits from the region could be aborted.

ALL previous Japanese governments have paid much attention on opening up relations with the Soviet Union. Nakasone set the improvement of Soviet relations as a major task of his cabinet.

He repeatedly stressed the danger of Japan's perpetual cold shoulder towards the Soviet Union.

Noboru Takeshita also said that Japan and the Soviet Union should co-operate for peace and stability in Asia and Pacific region.

Since Takeshita took office, Soviet-Japanese rela-

dialogues plus economic and trade exchanges.

The thrust of Takeshita's view is that Japanese relations with the Soviets is a means of strengthening Tokyo's political position and expanding its international influence as a "major political power."

A further advantage of Tokyo's improved relations with the Soviet Union will be increased relations

with Eastern Europe.

The Japanese Foreign Ministry is also working

out a strategy of opening up Soviet relations.

All the re-opening of the talks between the Foreign Ministers of the two countries towards the end of last year after a more than two years' pause, both sides agreed to set up a vice-ministerial group to discuss the northern islands issue.

Along with the opening of political dialogues, total trade between the two countries reached US \$ 5.1 billion in 1986. According to Japanese estimates, trade volume between two countries grew to a record

US \$ 6 billions in 1988.

The Japanese government is practicing a more

patient approach in this new relationship.

In one case a Japanese economic delegation composed of government officials and people from private business circles was set to visit the Soviet Union last autumn, but its trip was repeatedly post-

In addition, the Japanese Government has adopted a prudent attitude towards the Soviet Union's request for a joint research of 21 most advanced scientific

branches.

Such subjects include items as superconduction and nuclear fusion. Tokyo shelved the Soviet requests, saying further discussions are needed.

Some reasons behind the Japanese adopting such a go slow attitude towards the Soviet Union can be considered in the following:

The Japanese are aware of the Soviet's urgency to improve relations and they are using this as a way to win more concessions in the Kurile talks.

In addition, Japan wants to internationlise the Kurile issue by involving Western nations, with a view to bringing support from the West. By handling the territorial issue as one of a West-East relations issue, Western support on the Soviets could be played.

Despite Moscow's friendly overtures the Japanese are still keeping a wary eye on the Soviets. Japanese officials recently pointed out that the Soviet Union has continuously strengthened its Far East naval

might.

The Japanese also fear that once being drawn into contracts to develop Siberia, the Soviets are going to rip up any agreement over the Kuriles. Japanese enthusiasm over exploiting Siberia has been further trimmed with the global drop in energy and resource prices. After the Toshiba incident there has been increased pressure on Japan to restrain her relations with the Soviets. The Paris-based Coordinating Committee for Export Controls (COCOM) has brought further concern over the ties, strengthening trade limitations.

In addition, Japan holds that at the moment it can

tions have been further improved with upscaled gain little benefit another improved with upscaled gain little benefit another improved with upscaled gain little benefit another improved with upscaled gain little benefit and the Soviets Union if it begins its economic cooperation with the Soviets. The Soviet investment environment is poor and it is short of foreign exchanges.

> The territorial issue is still the main barrier to the improved Japanese-Soviet relations.

> The difficulty for the Soviets in giving this strategic location up is that the four northern islands control navigation from the Sea of Okhotsk to the Pacific.

> In order to protect the security of its own nuclear submarines in the region, the Soviet Union has been trying to turn the Sea of Okhotsk into its own internal sea so it can supervise and prevent US nuclear submarines or Japanese submarines from

moving into the Pacific.

The Soviet Union also fears that the returning of Kurile Islands will spark a chain reaction from European countries. Furthermore, domestic separatists might be morally strengthened and the Soviet's nationality contradictions brought further to a So

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It seems that the leadership of the Soviet Union is divided on just how to approach the Japanese.

The Japanese Government has maintained that the Soviet Union should return the territory at one time as part of a settlement package.

Tokyo's position is tempered by the long desire of its people and all political parties that hold that the Soviet Union should return all four of the Kuriles. With this in mind it will be very difficult for the Japanese government to make concessions on the issue. As a member of the Western bloc of countries and a US ally, Japan can use its ties with its friends to gain concessions over the territoral issue.

Although Moscow and Tokyo hold conflicting views and attitudes towards the Kurile issue, both sides will have to work for a solution. With increased domestic needs in both nations and with a relaxed world situation, there is a further spur to them to reach some compromise over the issue. As a result, both governments will probably adjust their respective stand on the issue.

Future agreement between these governments could be: (1) The Soviet Union could begin by withdraw ing its troops from the four northern islands with a curtailment on activity there until issues are settled through negotiations.

(2) The Kurile Islands could be jointly ruled and exploited by both countries or ruled by one country but used by either side.

(3) The Soviet Union could first return two of the four islands to Japan, while having the two other islands jointly used and fuled, or they could be ruled by one country and used by both sides.

(4) The Japanese government could barter back the four islands through the granting of an economic assistance programme to the Soviet Union of through some other means of assistance.

In coming years, high-level talks between the 100 (Continued on page 35)



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Soviet Stand on Japan's "Northern Territories"

In the growing debate on the prospect of Soviet-Japanese relations, the question Japan's "northern territories" figures prominently. A statement on the subject by the Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Rogachev was published by the Soviet Government newspaper, Izvestia (April 24, 1989) which is reproduced here for reference. —Editor

For several decades the Japanese official quarters have been making unfounded claims for a part of Soviet territory — the Southern Islands of the Kuril chain Iturup, Kunashir and the smaller Kuril chain, which are called "northern territories" in Japan. These claims have acquired the character of a permanent campaign.

By linking any substantial progress in Japanese-Soviet relations to unconditional satisfaction of their teritorial claims, the Japanese official quarters create a serious obstacle to any efforts to use the vast potential of co-operation between the Soviet Union and Japan, which could not only serve the interests of the peoples of the two countries but also help improve the general situation in Asia and the Pacific. This compels one once again to return to the subject and analyse the Japanese position.

Soviet sovereignty over the Kuril islands, including the above-mentioned islands of Iturup, Kunashir and the smaller Kuril chain is formalised in a number of international legal agreements, signed by the Allied powers during and after the Second World War.

The Yalta agreement of 1945, signed by the leaders of the USSR, the United States and Britain, is a fundamental legal document establishing the borders of Japan's post-war territorial sovereignty. It envisaged in no uncertain terms the "transfer of the Kuril islands to the Soviet Union". It should be noted that the leaders of the three great powers agreed that the provisions of the agreements they signed must be unconditionally fulfilled after the victory over Japan.

Now Tokyo claims that the Yalta Agreement has no relations to Japan because the latter did not sign about its existence. True, Japan did not and could was in a state of war with the Soviet Union's allies, it of the duty to fulfil the provisions of that agreelapan accepted the conditions of the Potsdam ment, is part of a single system of political, legal, lated by the Allied powers. This is confirmed by the Potsdam Declaration limited Japan's

sovereignty to the islands Honshu, Hokaido, Kyushu and Shikoku and to a group of smaller islands of the Japan archipelago — subject to the Allies' discretion.

Japan's obligation to comply with the Yalta Agreement also arises from Article 107 of the United Nations Charter, the fundamental document that finalised the results of the Second World War. It says that "nothing in the present Charter shall invalidate or preclude action, in relation to any state which, during the Second World War, has been an enemy of any signatory to the present Charter, taken or authorised as a result of that war by the governments having responsibility for such action".

The Yalta Agreement and its provisions are confirmed in the San Francisco Peace Treaty of 1951, which pledged Japan to renounce all rights, legal grievances and claims to the Kuril islands. The Japanese arguments that the Soviet Union cannot refer to this Treaty because it has not signed it that for the same reason Japan's renunciation of the Kuril islands does not apply to the USSR and that the latter cannot use this Treaty to confirm its right because the Treaty does not say to whom these islands are transferred, are untenable.

True, for some reasons the Soviet Union did not sign the San Francisco Treaty. It is also true that this document does not say in whose favour the Kuril Islands were given up by Japan. For all that, renunciation of the Kuril islands by Japan is of an absolute character, and its legal consequences go beyond the range of the parties to the San Francisco Treaty. This accords with the generally recognised international practice and doctrine which qualifies territorial law which concern international relations as a whole but not only relations among the countries — parties to such treaties.

Another argument used by the Japanese side to substantiate its claims is that Iturup, Kunashir and the smaller Kuril chain allegedly do not form part of the notion of "Kuril islands" which were given up by Japan in keeping with the San Francisco Treaty.

The Kuril Islands were nowhere and in no way divided in any international agreements of the war, and post-war time which resolved the issue of territorial belonging of the Kuril islands. The leaders of the Allied powers proceeded from the understanding

that the northern border of Japan's territory was limited by the coastline of Hokkaido island, while the notion "Kuril islands" comprised the whole archipelago, naturally including its southern part without any exceptions.

In the past the Japanese Government, too, reorganised the fact that Iturup and Kunashir islands and the smaller Kuril chain form part of the notion of "Kuril islands" given up by Japan according to the San Francisco Treaty. This is seen with particular clarity from the following statement made by the chief of the Treaty Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, K. Nishimura, during the consideration of the San Francisco Peace Treaty by the Parliament of Japan in 1951: "I hold the view that the territorial limits of the Kuril islands, dealt with in the Treaty, include both the northern Kuril islands and the southern Kuril islands...."

In Japan they like to engage in phrase-mongering to the effect that the occupation of the southern part of the Kuril archipelago by the Soviet Union signifies violation by it of the principle of renunciation of territorial expansion proclaimed in the Cairo Declaration of 1943 and that the Soviet Union's actions represent "unlawful occupation" of the aforesaid territories. But it is common knowledge that for a long time Japan used those islands as a base for aggression against the neighbouring countries, specifically for attacking Pearl Harbour and peaceful Soviet ships. Therefore, the fact that Japan was deprived of those islands after the war should be regarded not as "territorial expansion" on the part of the victors, but as a measure taken to "stop and punish Japan's aggression" in conformity with the principle of responsibility for aggression proclaimed in the aforesaid Cairo Declaration.

The thesis that the southern part of the Kuril islands belonged to Japan from time immemorial, a claim which is voiced by the Japanese side, deserves special consideration. In an interview with newspaper Izvestia Prime Minister Noboru Takeshita of Japan claimed: "When we speak about the territorial issue, we mean the demand that the Soviet Union should return to Japan its age-old lands—Habomai, Shikotan, Kunashir and Iturup—which were recognised back in the Japanese-Russian Treaty of 1855 as Japanese territories." It may be mentioned here that reference to developments of the remote past, which have long become history, may hardly have determining importance in resolving present-

NEXT WEEK

MAINSTREAM

will carry special articles on Sino-Soviet Summit

that the northern border of Japan's territory was may also be useful here.

limited by the coastline of Hokkaido island, while may also be useful here.

Historical data testify that in the early 17th century Russian explorers discovered and mapped out new lands in the East, including numerous islands in the northern part of the Pacific. The "Kuril land" was indicated already in many 17th century maps compiled on the basis of the data provided by Russian explorers and seafarers and published in Russia and western Europe. Japanese historical literature of the 1740s also mentions the discovery of these islands by Russians. The Kuril islands, their southern part included, were described cartographically for the fist time ever in 1711-1713 on the basis of the expedition headed by I. Kozyrevsky who gathered information about most of the Kuril islands, including Iturup, Kunashir and even the "22nd island" which later was called the Hokkaido island. Many other Russian names are known the history of the exploration and development of the Kurils.

It should be specially mentioned that in accordance with the policy of the Russian state the new lands discovered by Russian explorers were included in Russia. They began studies and economic development of these islands, conducted missionary activity, and laid the local population with a yasak (tribute). They strictly adhered to the government's instructions not to encroach on the sovereign possessions of other states. While discovering and developing the islands, they exactly established that the Kurils did not belong to any other state. In I. Kozyrevsky's message sent in 1713 it was noted that south Kurils Ainus "are not subjects of any other nation and are engaged in free trade."

It should be stressed that the Russian discoverers actions aimed at making local inhabitants subjects of Russia were confirmed by state acts. Soviet historians refer to the message of the senate to Catherine of January 18, 1727, with a request to issue an Ukaz (edict) on the inclusion of new lands in Russia, including the islands discovered in the Pacific, and to the empress "Ukaz" of April 10, 1727.

In a message to Catherine II written on December 22, 1786 by A.R. Vorontsov, President of the Kommerz-Collegium, and A.A. Bezborodko, state secretary, it was pointed out that "the north-western shore of America with the islands around it and with other island chains stretching from there to Kamchatka and from the latter peninsula to Japan was discovered long ago by Russian seafarers alone," and that therefore, all these lands "should indisputably belong to Russia." On the basis of this report, on December 22, 1786 as "Ukaz" was published under Catherine II's signature in which, in particular, measures for preserving "our right to lands covered by Russian seafarers" were determined.

In the 18th century all Kuril islands, including their southern part, were included in Russia. This can be confirmed by the statement made in 1805 by N. Rezanov, head of the Russian delegation at the talks with K. Toyama, a representative of Japanese government. He said that "all lands and

waters north of the Matsmai Island (Hokkaido) international situation. belong to the Russian Emperor, and the Japanese The Soviet Union we should not spread their possessions further."

Soviet scholars proceed from the fact that the historical borders of the Japanese state were shaped finally in 1636, when Chogun Tokugawa Izmitsu issued a special edict prohibiting the Japanese under a death penalty from leaving the territory of their country and building large ships for long voyages. In the scholarly circles it is assumed that Japan's borders in the north passed in that period along the coast of the Hokkaido island. It is common knowledge that throughout the 18th century and the first half of the 19th century the Japanese feudal government firmly followed the policy of self-isolation from the outside world. It is obvious that such a policy ruled out any possibilities of expanding Japanese territory, in particular in the north.

A question arises: why did Russia, which had historical and juridical rights to all Kuril islands, agree in 1855 to the demarcation of the border with Japan between Urup and Iturup? The answer to this question can be found in the 1855 Russian-Japanese Treaty: "may there be henceforth permanent peace and sincere friendship between Russia and Japan."

These hopes were never justified. As Japan's economic and military potential was increasing, it was bending more and more towards territorial expansion which ultimately led to a treacherous attack on Russia, to the 1904-1905 Russian-Japanese war and to the forcible seizure of southern Sakhalin. All that brought down to naught the previous Russian-Japanese agreements on territorial division, including the 1855 treatise.

All of these historical facts lead to the conclusion that the Kuril islands, including their southern part, had belonged to Russia and not Japan, and that Japan's territorial claims on the Soviet Union in the context of "restoring historical justice" are groundless.

Allegations that the demand for "returning the northern territories" reflects the "expectations" of the Japanese people cannot be accepted either. The Japanese public opinion on the "territorial issue" has been shaped for years on the basis of biased interpretation of facts and documents. Moreover, one could not meet the demands of the Japanese and neglect the opinion of the Soviet people, most of whom, according to opinion polls, have a sharply ing them as a manifestation of revanchism, and demand that these claims be resolutely turned down.

To buttress its stand, Japan is turning to other countries for support, which arouses bewilderment any attempts to review the results of World War II, at them are not altogether harmless and can even the current complicated and fragile

The Soviet Union would like to maintain the relations of peace and cooperation with Japan, which would equally meet the interests of both the countries. In view of this, it works to make them more meaningful and dynamic, all of which necessitates mutual efforts, a search for mutually-acceptable solutions, based on the renunciation of any preliminary terms, and respect for the problems and interests of the partner.

The Soviet Union and Japan have a problem which is not territorial. It is the problem of peace treaty which is still to be concluded. Peace treaty, as we see it, is a fundamental inter-state act, summing up the experience of Soviet-Japanese post-war relations and mapping out guidelines for their future development. Of course, the approach to the content of the peace treaty should be based on the results of World War II, with due account taken of the practice of international relations in the subsequent years. The treaty should reflect the Soviet Union's and Japan's adherence to the basic and internationally recognised principles and goal's formulated in the Charter and other documents of the UN, proclaim the two sides' peaceful intentions as well as their readiness to treat one another in the spirit of cooperation, not to interfere in the partner's internal affairs and reject any action threatening the partner's security. It would be logical to include in it the two sides' commitments to develop fruitful cooperation in trade and economy, science and engineering, and in the cultural and humanitarian spheres on the basis of equality and mutual advantage. A peace treaty should also cover the geographical aspects and define the post-war borders between the Soviet Union and Japan.

As the two sides have different views on certain problems pertaining to the content of the peace treaty, it may not be easy to conclude it. Yet the plan can be carried through if it is approached from the position of reason and realism, and if the two sides act without haste and excessive emotions.

Yaohua: Moscow's Japan Policy

(Contd. fram page 32)

national leaders will probably increase with the development of economic relations.

Within the year, Soviet leader Gorbachev's visit to Japan will probably take place and a definite date will be set for the visit of a Japanese economic delegation composed of both governmental and non-governmental interests.

One further move towards this process is that in order to spur private investment in the USSR, the Japanese government has accepted all trade insurance liability for investment made there.

This move has helped investments, for example, the 12 billion yen luxury Moscow hotel, due for approval this summer, becomes quite feasible.

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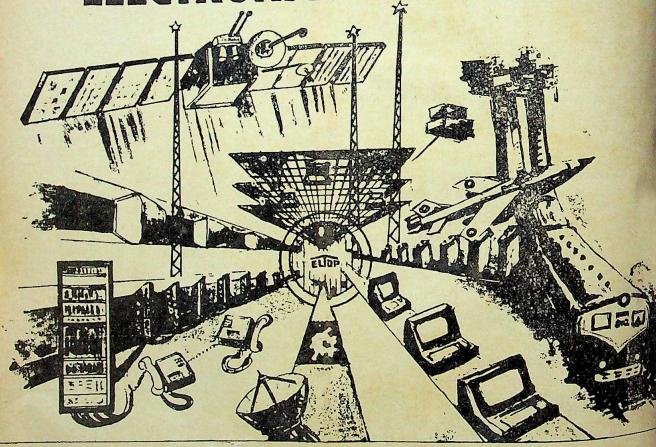
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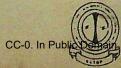
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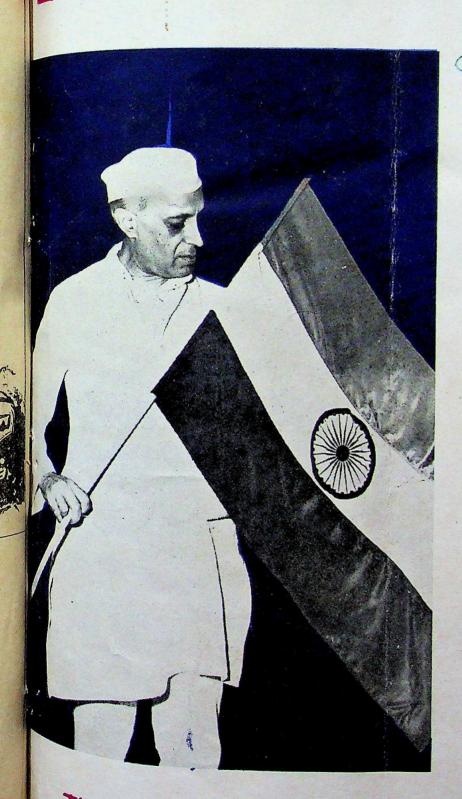


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And though I have discarded much of past tradition and custom, and am anxious that India should rid herself of all shackles that bind and constrain her and divide her people, and suppress vast numbers of them and prevent the free development of the body and the spirit; though I seek all this, yet I do not wish to cut myself off from that past completely. I am proud of that great inheritance that has been, and is, ours, and I am conscious that I too, like all of us, am a link in that unbroken chair which goes back to the dawn of history in the immemorial past of India. That chain I would not break, for I treasure it and seek inspiration from it.

Javaharlel Nehm

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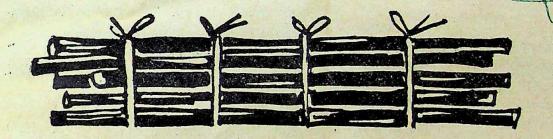
our country
is a very big country
and thus a great deal
to be done by all of us.
If each one of us
does his or her little bit,
then all this mounts up
and the country prospers
and goes ahead fast.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru

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A nation's foremost duty is to strengthen and preserve its freedom. This is the one yardstick to measure every other activity. If we give importance to other things, like our group, our State, our language or our caste, and forget our country, we shall be destroyed.

- Jawaharlal Nehru



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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

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Meaning of Agni

The week that marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of the passing away of Jawaharlal Nehru - on May 22, 1989, India projected a political image of its strength and determination before the world which no amount of borrowed arsenal could have achieved. The firing of the intermediate range missile, Agni, hitting a target of a thousand kilometres away was not just an engineering feat, its importance lies in the fact that it was designed and manufactured in India by our scientists - no mean achievement for a developing country hamstrung as we are by constant pulls and pressures by great powers particularly by the US Administration.

It is widely known that for months, if not more than a year ago, Washington was trying to pressurise the Government of India to abandon the firing of the long-range missile. The so-called Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) set up in 1987 by seven Western countries under the leadership of USA is meant to stifle initiative in this line by any

country on the plea of preventing the proliferation of deadly missiles much in the same way as the nuclear non-proliferation treaty aims at preventing the manufacture of nuclear weapons by any country and thereby protecting the monopoly of the nuclearweapons powers which virtually aims at establishing their hegemony over the rest of the world. Under the MTCR, there is a ban on the export of instruments, parts and information that could be used for the purpose of manufacturing missiles. The US Administration went a step further and for the last four months had specifically been pressuring New Delhi to call off the launching of the Agni, threatening that it might invite retaliatory measures affecting India's trade with USA.

The delay in the launching of the Agni by about a year and its postponement twice after announcement of the schedule did spread the misgivings that the Government of India might be caving in to the American pressures particularly when one noticed

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This Special Number being double the size of an ordinary number, the next issue of Mainstream will MAINSTREAM May 27, 1989

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such wilting on the part of the Rajiv Government on the important question of intellectual property. The US campaign has not ceased even after the firing of the Agni as could be seen from the hectic activity of US mission in Delhi and of the State Department in Washington presaging dire consequences Viewed in this background the successful launching of the Agni has been doubly welcomed by all sections of the Indian public, cutting across

party barriers.

There has been an instantaneous manifestation of acclaim for the Indian scientists and engineers who are responsible for this remarkable achievement. It is actually a patriotic upsurge - recognition on the one hand of the dedication of our scientists and engineers who battling against overwhelming odds have achieved this feat, and on the other, of the sense of national pride at having attained a degree of self-reliance in sophisticated technology. What needs to be emphasised is that in this country there is an almost inexhaustible fountain of national pride at attaining swadeshi in any field, particularly in those where outside powers might try to block our advance.

A point worth noting in this context is that in the fraternity of our dedicated scientists, there is an overpowering commitment to upholding national interests which ensures a remarkable degree of mutual trust and confidence. At a time when our politicians are engrossed in counting their constituencies according to communal demography, when such sensitive issues like the Babri Mosque-Ram Janambhoomi are exploited to vitiate communal Government itself sfights shy amity, when the

Next issue of

Mainstream

June 10, 1989 will carry

Raini Kothari's article

The New Detente

Some Reflections from the South

Jayanta Bandyopadhyay and Vandana Shiva's article

> Political Economy of **Ecology Movements**

Boudhayan Chattopadhyay's article

The Dangerous Decade till 2000 AD

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and Gangottiand for the promotion of durable communal amity, it is indeed heartening to find that at the head of this successful missile development programme is a distinguished scientist belonging to the minority community. It is distinguished also significant that while the Pakistan Foreign Minister Shahibzada Yakub Khan has branded the launching of the Agni as a threat to the security of the region, Pakistan's distinguished Nobel Laureate. Dr. Abdus Salaam has greeted it as a 'very good' achievement. Here is a clear example of the fraternity of goodwill that the scientists represent within their own country as also across the frontiers.

It is good to see that the Prime Minister greeting our scientists and hailing it as a "major achievement in our continuing efforts to safeguard our independence and security by self-reliant means". Coming from him, it is particularly significant because one cannot help recalling that in the first phase of his Prime Ministership Rajiv Gandhi had been almost uninhibited in his attack on the work of the Indian scientists, so much so that a virtual wall of misunderstanding would have come up between him and our scientific community but for the sagacity and fortitude of our leading scientists. The policy of virtual open-door to foreign collaboration, the reckless wastage of hard-earned foreign exchange for importing consumer durables and encouragement of foreign investments even in areas where Indian science and technology have made considerable headway - the hallmark of Rajiv economies — all these reflected an outlook which could hardly be regarded as congenial to the promotion of self-reliance. It is to the credit of our scientists that with their sturdy patriotism they refused to be swept away by such policy reversal on the part of the Rajiv Government and in a determined manner pursued their line of selfreliance which lies behind the successful launching of the Agni.

While there is nation-wide spontaneous jubilation at the achievement by our scientists and engineers, one has to guard against any jingoist outburst about our country's military superiority over our neighbours — a tendency which our politicians with their narrow vision are prone to indulge in and a government haunted by the spectre of electoral reverses may conveniently resort to. Such a course would bring irreparable damage to our national interests and to the reputation of this great country. Appropriately, the message of the Five-Nation-Six-Country Initiative urging the two super-powers to redouble their efforts towards nuclear disarmament was release ed on the very day of the launching of the Agni, reminding ourselves that the supreme task before us all is not to prepare for war but to strive for peace. India has to emphasise this by actual deeds, not merely by the electrons. merely by the rhetoric of highfalutin declarations.

One has to guard against any euphoria of our illitary strength and military strength, as there are few in authority in our public life, today and public life today who understand the dividing line between patriction between patriotism and chauvinism — a point which Jawaharlal Nehry and chauvinism — a point which Jawaharlal Nehru never wavered in emphasising as an axiom of his forci an axiom of his foreign policy.

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Bliss was it in that dawn!

Like a thunder-lap it has burst. The massive student upsurge that has gripped China today has no parallel in history. A new page is being added to the great revolutions in the annals of humankind — the French, the Russian, the Chinese and our own. We are witness today to an unprecedented concentration of millions of students, disciplined and determined, and by the very demonstration of their solidarity for the cause of democracy attracting intellectuals and workers. By their resolute determination they could win over the armed forces to the point that a section of officers publicly demanded the rescinding of martial law.

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Here is a remarkable case of mass civil disobedience disarming the authorities of their authority. Forty-one years after Gandhi's martyrdom, his commandment is being vindicated in Beijing's historic Tien An Men Square. A nation whose leadership had once claimed that power flows from the barrel of a gun is proving by deed that more powerful than the gun is the awakened consciousness of the people. Here is the revolutionary message of our time.

In terms of the current developments in the Communist world, the upheaval in Beijing backed by reverberations all over China, brings out sharply that major structural reforms in the sphere of the economy will have to inexorably force the demand for unshackled democracy. There could be no impetus for individual endeavour on the economic sphere without the full flowering of democracy.

A significant feature of the mammoth student upsurge in China today is that while it has repudiated any dishonouring of Mao Tse Dung, it did not at the same time lionise him

nor did they turn to Mao for inspiration. Instead, they have tried to recapture the spirit of the great May 4 movement which had stirred China exactly seventy years ago. The spirit of patriotic assertion for national self-respect endures even through changes in the social balance of forces. This is a point which needs to be emphasised — the intensity of patriotic fervour in defence of national self-respect and national interests.

This phenomenal assertion of student power in China has taken by total surprise China's leadership of the Government and ruling party. So much so that the political leadership found itself out of tune to the point that its threat of law only reinforced the students' determination and spirit of defiance. In other words, it is clear as daylight that those in authority had totally misjudged the nature and the magnitude of the ferment that stirred the students. Not only in China but in other countries as well, unique mass stirrings have been coming up, whose dimensions turn out to be unpredictable for those in authority. What we are witnessing today in China should serve as a warning to ruling establishments all over the world that in this period of historic transition, they will have to encounter challenges of momentous magnitude. The day of the stereotype in politics is over, for this is indeed a period of revolutionary renewal. And so watching what's happening in Beijing today, one is tempted to recall the words of the poet who, witnessing another revolution, had exclaimed:

Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive, But to be young was very heaven!

N.C.

Assessing Beijing Sino-Soviet Summit

MIRA SINHA BHATTACHARJEA

May 15 to May 18, the days of the long-awaited Sino-Soviet summit, were four days that were expected to change the world, Nixon style. The summit, and the substantive normalisation it signified, should have set into motion a process affecting four of its acknowledged great powers and a large invested the meeting with more than the largely lateral significance that the Indian Prime Minister

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has deigned to give it.

However, all these expectations have to be suspended for the time being for domestic events in China have in a sense undercut the achievements of the summit by raising the spectre of long term instability in China.

This visit was as carefully planned as was the Nixon visit to China in 1972. In both cases, the Chinese were insistent that the summit should manifest for the world a visible resolution of what had divided them in the past and should not be merely a statement of intention to improve relations or improve the atmosphere in which normalisation could be pursued.

So it was that Chinese responded cautiously to Gorbachev's overtures to establish a new and cooperative relationship. His words were welcomed but China pressed for 'proof' of his intentions through 'deeds', as it had with the US seventeen years earlier. In both cases China insisted, in Zhou's memorable phrase, that "the doer should undo the knot". That is, that responsibility for the inimical relationship be acknowledged and restitution be made.

On its part China took the first major step, in both cases, by altering its ideological and strategic priorities. Thus, in 1968, China declared that revisionism' was its principal ideological concern and the Soviet Union, not the United States, its Enemy No. 1'.

The US had responded by referring to China as the 'People's Republic' and went on to withdraw its Seventh Fleet from the Taiwan Straits, to countenance if not encourage the belated recognition of China by its allies and did not 'prevent' the seating of China in the United Nations and more important, the simultaneous expulsion of its ally, Taiwan. After that the Chinese were prepared to accept an agreement 'on principle' that Taiwan was part of China without demanding an immediate end to all US-Taiwan ties. It was this preparation in deeds that gave substance to the Nixon-Zhou summit.

The diplomatic minuet between China and the Soviet Union followed a basically similar pattern. The first major step was again taken by China. This time it took the form of a 1981 Resolution on Party History that repudiated the Cultural Revolution together with its ideological basis, thus ending the ideological divide between the two countries and restoring once more a broad ideological commonality. It also, by implication, ended the strategic confrontation between the two states (despite the events in Indo-China and Afghanistan). A year later, at the 12th Party Congress, China declared that it would follow a policy of independence and equidistance from the two super-powers.

It is a measure of the importance that the Soviet Union gives to China's strategic role that the Brezhnev response was swift and equal. Speaking at Tashkent in March 1982 he also restored China to the socialist fold and went on to declare that USSR recognised Taiwan to be an integral part of China. Relations between the two countries in various fields began to show an upswing but the process was plateaued by the sensitive territorial Soviets like the Indians had taken certain positions on the border question which the Chinese argued were contrary to historical fact or to international law. The Chinese were adamant that the 'give' on these positions would have to be on the part of the Soviet Union.

The Chinese also publicly raised the three obstacles (Soviet troop concentration along their borders and in Mongolia, the presence of Soviet troops in Afghanistan and the continuing presence of Vietnamese troops in Cambodia). All three were regarded as a threat to China's security and as symbols of Soviet expansionism and hegemonism in Asia. It seemed at that time that neither Brezhnev nor any likely

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGangotrid be willing to concede to China on any of these issues involving national honour and national prestige, that the strategic rivalry between them would continue to be the central axis of international relations particularly in Asia.

It took a Gorbachev to cut through the impasse transforming 'concessions', into minor rectifications of aberrational policies and almost a moral act for the attainment of larger goals and values. So, at Vladivostok, he conceded the Chinese position on the application of the Thalweg Principle to even nonnavigable rivers. This subtlety was lost on most: what was in dispute was not the future of Damansky or Chenpao Islands where the bloody clashes of 1969 had taken place, but a little Island called Bear Island which lies facing Khabarovsk. By granting ownership of this Island, which can threaten both the shipping and security of Khabarovsk to China. prior to negotiations, he left its future to be decided mutually on the basis of interest not law. It was a major act of trust.

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Gorbachev also, as is well-known, addressed himself to two of the three issues raised by China and followed this up by a later willingness to talk to China about the Vietnam-Kampuchean issue and, in doing so, made the summit possible.

In addition he expressed his readiness to go to China instead of insisting, as diplomatic protocol could demand, that Mr Deng come to Moscow. This was an act of courtesy which acknowledged the age and fraility of China's strong man.

Finally, as he did in Beijing, Gorbachev had the supreme confidence to accept responsibility for the hostile past as well as to make unilateral offers for the demilitarisation of the Soviet-Chinese border without demanding reciprocity or mutuality.

As a consequence, military deployment along the border will be reduced by 120,000 troops that is by 12 Soviet divisions and 11 air force regiments. Sixteen of the warships of the Pacific Fleet will also be withdrawn. In response the Chinese agreed, according to the communique, to take similar measures, to reduce force levels to the minimum "commensurate with the normal, good neighbourly relations between the two countries and work for increased trust and continuous tranquility along the border

All this as well as the earlier policies, added to the admiration he aroused among the Chinese people. This very admiration, however, made him also the symbol and hope of the Chinese students, workers and ordinary citizens who in an awesome display of people's power had undertaken a confrontation frontation with their leaders demanding greater democracy and freedom and an end to the wides pread official corruption. The ferment continued through Gorbachev's visit, upsetting official and scheduled programmes, almost involving him also in what appears to the scheduled programmes, almost involving him also in what appears to be an ongoing power struggle between the Party C. between the Party Secretary Zhao Ziyang and the Premier Li Peng.

While the first round seems to have gone to the 'go-slower' on glasnost Li Peng, the final outcome remains unclear with Zhao holding important cards such as the support such as the support of the military (he is also

Chairman of the powerful Military Commission) wide popular support among the intellectuals and students. He was also, it should be remembered, brought to power as Deng's own choice, and is known to stand firmly for reforms. In short, while Gorbachev and the Soviet media comment have heen careful not to appear partisan in the ongoing power struggle, there is little doubt that Zhao would be more to the Soviet liking. This is important for the final outcome could seriously affect the future of Sino-Soviet relations and even jeopardise Gorbachev's Asia-Pacific policy in which China forms the cornerstone.

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There was, on the whole, nothing unexpected about the known achievements of the summit. The restoration of normalcy in both the state and party relations was expected, as was the unilateral offer to reduce troop and military strength along the border and Gorbachev's plea for the initiation of an Asia-Pacific peace process. It could also have been anticipated that both would disclaim that their normalisation was directed against a third country, that there would be no criticism of US as superpower, hegemon, or imperialist.

It was also predictable that the Chinese would want to include in the joint communique an antihegemony clause similar to the one that had formed part of the Shanghai Communique. Finally, it could also have been expected that Sino-Soviet differences over the transitional period in Cambodia, between the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops and the holding of internationally supervised elections, would be made known.

But, what was also expected but did not take place, was the conclusion of a boundary treaty or agreement. The problem has obviously proved to be more intractable and complex than was anticipated, perhaps because it involves areas that are populated. Even so, what was the need to spell out a detailed formula for the resolution of the territorial issue when, according to sources in both capitals, agreement has already been reached on the major portion of this long, long border? This formula needs to be tead by every concerned Indian for it is likely to to have a bearing on our negotiations with the Chinese. This formula as presented in the communique reads: "The two sides favoured a fair and reasonable settlement of the Sino-Soviet boundary question left over from the past, on the basis of the treaties concerning the present Sino-Soviet boundary and of the generally recognised principles of international law and in a spirit of consultations on an equal footing and mutual understanding and mutual accommodation."

There are some other elements of the communique that have similarly escaped attention and comment in this country and which are of the greatest significance. For instance both sides agreed that they would resolve their differences through peaceful negotiations. The communique, however, went to use arms includto use arms against the other by any means including the use against the other by any means including the use of ing the use of territorial land, water or air space of third or territorial land, water or air space of a third country bordering on the other side"

Chairman of the powerful Military Commission). In effect this nullifies in one sentence all bilateral of the 'reformers' within the party by they a same agreements containing putative security clauses such as Article 9 of the Indo-Soviet treaty, or clauses that enable the Soviet Union to station military forces in Mongolia or use bases such as Cam Ranh Bay. If agreements have any meaning, the two countries have agreed to convert the important belt of neighbouring countries into a buffer zone into which neither will introduce its military power, in any form. While the agreement is reciprocal, it is the Soviet Union that will make the major withdrawal which, despite what the two leaders have said, will affect certain third countries.

It should also be noted that the two sides agreed that "future Cambodia should be an independent, peaceful, neutral and nonaligned state". This formulation will please all nations but at the same time it commits the Soviets to preventing the emergence of a united Indochina which has been a long held

national goal of Vietnam.

Among the other points of interest in the communique are: A reiteration of the Soviet commitment to recognise Taiwan as an integral part of China while the Chinese have not thought it necessary to ask for a similar commitment on Tibet. Further, there is no mention of the nonaligned movement or even of the Third World, or of that strange creature known as the international communist movement. All of this indicates that the game as played by the great powers whether socialist or otherwise, is an in' game that does not include the Third World countries as equal players.

To conclude, it may be safely said that Gorbachev appears to have given more than he got in terms of tangible political gains. But, in terms of his grand scheme or New Thinking, he has undoubtedly made enormous gains provided the turmoil in China does not lead to such instability that he is unable to regard China as a factor for peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region.

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Neo-Machiavellians at Work

N.S. JAGANNATHAN

THE syllogism is simple: Politics is about power. Power corrupts. Therefore there can be no poli-

tics except corrupt politics.

In a wicked world, it is easy enough to find evidence of the venality of politicians and rather an impressive amount of it from different parts of the world has been churned up recently. Japan has been rocked by the Recruit scandal, a sordid tale of politicians from the Prime Minister downwards, living off a businessman's largesse. From the United States comes news of the conviction by a Federal Court Jury of Oliver North, the White House aide who, in his own words, was the designated fall guy and pawn in a "chess game played by giants" in the Iran-Contra scam.

Nearer home, the recently-concluded session of Parliament has added some squalid footnotes to the two-year-old (to go back no farther) history of sharp practice and self-aggrandisement. From field guns to fodder machines is a bit of a come down but the principle is the same. As Karunanidhi once put it:
"If you are within reaching distance of a bottle of honey, you can't be blamed for dipping your fingers in it and licking them." In other words, there is no such thing as clean politics and whoever talks of it is a canting humbug.

So argue the neo-Machiavellians who come in all shapes and sizes these days. There are the "structuralists" who maintain that corruption is embedded in the system — at least in the Indian system — and one had better come to terms with it as something given instead of bleating about "value-based politics". The systemic argument of ineradicable societal compulsions has also been invoked in the recent controversy over the Recruit scandal in Japan. (More on

this, presently).

There are then the pseudo-Marxists who use a different kind of systemic argument to debunk the hypocrisies of the bourgeois values of personal rectitude, concern for the means used for political ends and a code of honour in public life. To them, political morality is a meaningless shibboleth unless it concerns itself with the iniquities of the underlying economic relations between the competing classes of haves and have nots. In other words, there is nothing to choose between a reasonably honest politician and a dirty one, between one who respects the received code of public conduct and one who does not; between one who is squeamish about how he gets to the seat of power and what he does to stay there and one

The author, a former Editor of Financial Express, is presently editorial adviser to Indian Express.

who is not. It is one thing to say that a particular individual who swears by clean politics is in fact a hypocritical scoundrel. That is a judgement, right or wrong, on one person. But it is quite another to say that the values of honesty, incorruptibility and treating power as a public trust are irrelevant, if these are not seen to be put in the service of structural transformation.

Indeed, the Japanese and American instances though not, alas, the Indian one, so far, at any rate - have in one sense non-Machiavellian morals. Dirty tricks, chicanery, corruption and betrayal of public trust and lying to and deceiving legislatures do occur as routine practices in those countries too. But the wrong doers are caught and made to pay at least some of them. Not only does the system provide for this - affirming a principle of the despised public morality — but it is seen as prevailing, though not completely, at least in the American case. (More on this, later). Oliver North has been convicted and Takeshita has resigned under public pressure. (Nothing comparable, alas again, has happened in

IN Japan, the Recruit scandal that broke last July has finally unseated the Japanese Prime Minister after he was forced to confess to having been suborned by a company. He was long prevaricating and when he did make a clean breast of it, the truth came out in two instalments. This company has been routinely buying up politicians by, among other things, "prefloatation" shares that could be (and were) sold later at fabulous profits. Takeshita is only the most prized catch in a haul of 40 odd politicians and industrial tycoons in this affair. The scandal has also taken its toll in other ways. Takeshita's aide committed a grisly suicide the day after the Prime Minister resigned.

In the public introspection that followed the affair, "structural" extenuation about the compulsions of Japanese politics have been offered. An article in Newsweek by a company director, Keniche Ohmae, makes the point that Takeshita was "a sacrificial lamb on the altar of a political system that legitimises totally mises totally immoral practices". Politics, he says, has becomes very expensive in Japan and politicians are obliged to find money for a variety of social obligations to their constituents merely to stay in business. It would seem, for example, a 2000-yearold Japanese custom ordains that guests at weddings and funerals offer gifts before they leave. Diet members attend about 1.000 such occasions every year. The money one has to find for this purpose

Lobbying for interest groups is routine with Japanese politicians. (Takeshita was himself linked with the construction industry in which a Recruit subsidiary was engaged). According to Ohmae, when Japan was pressured by the US into making the Japanese economy save less and consume more, Nakasone, the then Prime Minister, "authorised \$ 43 billion in emergency spending", mostly on public construction. With such a bonanza offered on a platter, can kickbacks be far behind?

But explanations are not extenuations, a fact that neo-Machiavellians often forget. The Japanese threshold of tolerance of venality in public life has clearly been crossed and Takeshita has had to leave.

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The Ollie North story has mixed, indeed ambiguous, morals. The tenacity and ingenuity of the American legal system in the pursuit of public purpose and in the vindication of public morality is beyond doubt. But equally obvious are two facts: Oliver North was indeed "a fall guy" in a far greater felony by far more powerful people who have escaped, at least so far. White House documents requistioned and allowed to be used in evidence in the trial clearly confirm that President Reagan had - contrary to his prevarications soon after the scam broke in November 1986 - personally approved covert operations to help the Nicaraguan Contras. They also show that Vice-President Bush, as he then was, had sat in on a White House discussion of a plan to circumvent congressional ban on aid to the Contras by getting third countries like Honduras to provide such aid and be recompensed for the trouble by American aid to themselves. President Bush (as he now is) admits that he had visited Honduras soon thereafter. But he denies invoking the honour of the word of the US President - a some what shop-soiled commodity this, after President Nixon — that there was any quid pro quo for Honduran aid to the Contras.

The interesting thing about the verdict of the July -which, because of the American legal system's scrupulous concern for justice being seen to be done, had to consist of people who were totally ignorant of the whole affair! — was that they have found North guilty of abetting and aiding rather than of the substantive charge of actual "obstruction of Congress". The significance of this is, that while not accepting North's plea that he was merely a tool of other people's purposes and therefore had committed no offence, the Jury have unambiguously implied that North's superiors were involved in the felony. Only the fact that these others were not, for whatever reason, before the Jury, saved them from indict-

Thus, the major actors in this squalid business are, as of now, beyond the reach of law. And after having safely contained the scandal during the preelection months and won the election for his party, Reagan himself has slid into graceful retirement without the months and won the election for without losing his fellow countrymen's affection for him as him as an amiable old fuddy-duddy. Clearly, the Iran-Contra scam is no Watergate. Point to the neo-

The other ambiguous aspect of the North affair

alone would make honesty ingreditive and similar foundation Cheens and a Gangotti with the American public. As he emerged from the trial, he was greeted with placards that proclaimed "We love Ollie" and "North, an American hero". A nation-wide opinion poll by USA Today showed that 52 per cent of the sampled public were for a Presidential pardon for North and 36 per cent against. Again, a victory for the pragmatists and positivists who hold that value judgments are valueless.

> NEARER home, the defeat of "value-based politics" is even more complete and the neo-Machiavellians have cause for feeling vindicated. For two years, there has been a continuous stream of incontrovertible evidence of huge sums having changed hands in the Bofors deal and of a cosy mutuality between businessmen and politicians in power. More recently, there have surfaced lesser peccadillos like making a killing on economically unviable fodder machines imported on false customs declarations.

> Nothing, but nothing, happens. The neo-Machiavellians are right. In the sociologist's jargon, corruption has been internalised and it is business as usual. (Courtesy: Indian Express).

Nehru, Rajiv and Federalism

In March 1986, Rajiv Gandhi ventured to assert in a press interview that our Constitution does not establish a federal system at "That is why the word 'federal' never used in our own Constitution. In fact, Panditji and other stalwarts were very strongly against using the word." The style is a familiar one - the instant convenient assertion, in reckless disregard for the truth.

However, in a letter to the Chief Ministers on November 15, 1954, Panditji expounded his outlook on planning in our federal system which deserves to be quoted in extenso: "We are already thinking of the Second Five-Year Plan. In framing this, the help of the Chief Ministers and their Governments is essential. Planning, inevitably, involves a measure of centralisation. In other countries, such as China, which I have recently visited, there is an absolute centralisation in the Governmental structure. Whatever other advantages or disadvantages this may have, it facilitates planning. We do not function in that way not only because of our parliamentary democracy, but also because we are a federal union with a large measure of autonomy in the States, I think this autonomy is good and, indeed, I believe in decentralisation in the largest possible extent, provided it does not weaken the unity of the country or come in the way of its progress".

> -From an article by A.G. Noorani in Indian Express (May 24, 1989)

ROAD-BLOCK TO 21st CENTURY

Forever Amber

L.K. SHARMA

Is India's pursuit of modernisation to be a spent affair? The two symbols of modernisation - the fuel-efficient automobile and the personal computer which promised an unbridled region in 1985, are being deglorified. The message came clearly in the recent Union Budget which dealt a heavy blow to two of the highly visible products that were to have gone into the making of the 21st century Indian.

The race towards the new century was flagged off by Rajiv Gandhi soon after he assumed power. Those who needed to be seen around Rajiv Gandhi feigned enthusiasm for all things modern - be they T-shirts or personal computers. The general reaction, however, was one of scepticism while the confirmed Luddites were shocked. Many others welcomed someone as young and forward-looking as Rajiv Gandhi who appeared to be keen on hastening things and moving away from the beaten track. They were impressed to see a Prime Minister driving a jeep, flying an aeroplane and tapping the keys of the word-processor himself. They saw in him a nonpolitician who could take bold decisions to ward off the disaster of obsolescence that the country's industrial infrastructure is heading towards.

However, even those who appreciated Rajiv Gandhi's intent doubted his capacity to achieve the objective. The votaries of technological upgradation who understood the complex economic, political and social issues and problems of adjustment involved wondered whether the new government could muster the sustained political will and grit to implement coherent and long-term policies. They saw modernisation to be contingent upon overcoming both institutional and technological constraints to development. They said modernisation was more than just development and that there was an economic, technological

and strategic dimension to it.

The task, no doubt, was stupendous considering the nature of this traditional, somnolent society, satisfied with the Hindu rate of growth and accustomed to managing change at its own pace. To bring about a revolutionary change, the catalyst must be one who is in communion with the people. Nehru, despite his western education, had bridged the gulf and established an equation with the masses. He was not branded a heretic when he hailed as 'temple', a soulless irrigation project. But more than decades later and that much closer to the 21st century, Rajiv Gandhi's plea for computerisation became a

The author is a Special Correspondent of The Times of India.

cartoonist's delight. Even erudite editors, not just earthy politicians, found it odd that computers should enter the All India Congress Committee office to violate the purity of white sprawling The candidates for the mattresses and bolsters. party ticket, accustomed to dealing with the panchewing middleman — a mirror-image of the Kakkaji of the TV series — found the number-crunching machine to be patently offensive. Politics is for enjoying and using discretionary powers and not for curbing these by introducing unsubtle mechanics of a computer.

Since the campaign against the power-brokers was on, the computer managed to secure a toe-hold for a while in the AICC office but soon found the room temperatures too hot for its working. The balance of power gradually shifted back to men and the machine was shown its place for having arrived too early on the scene. The personal data on the lives and crimes of the party ticket-seekers was killed with

a simple command.

A modernisation drive requires psychological under-pinnings. It hits so many entrenched interests that it requires a strong and charismatic leader who can inspire the people and then persuade or compel them to share his vision of the future. A modernisation drive calls for an understanding of the Indian reality and not merely reiteration of the coming century. Using the current idiom, one can say that the 21st century was not marketed properly. Of course, it will arrive on time, all the same.

The setback to modernisation because of an abrupt halt to the reform of political culture does have an effect that is more than symbolic. A minister such as Arun Singh discussing the integrated missiles programme with defence scientists is not the same as Kalpnath Rai discussing the thermal power generation programme in the energy ministry. Only a party like the Congress can span such a wide cultural gap.

What has been the record in the field of industrial modernisation? Going by the two examples of the fuel-efficient car and the personal computer, one cannot but conclude that the revolution was aborted for some computer. for some compelling reasons. In 1985, the Government wanted to City or a series of the control o ment wanted to fill the technological gap and create large domestic markets, stronger R & D capabilities in industry and international competitiveness. And, of course, it wanted to satisfy the appetite of the demanding middle classes for good things. With all seriousness of purpose, the Government began to inspire industry. inspire industry to think big and plan big. It promised to ensure the emergence of large domestic markets for products such as guzzed by Arya Samai Foundation Chennal and eGangotri one of the nation's priorities. Colour TV, when it rightly argued that without large-scale operatic came, not only popularised the "Lucy Show" tions, indigenous capabilities in new materials, components and equipment would never be built up to a

satisfactory level.

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Numbers held the key to the international marketplace, technological upgradation and innovation. And numbers being a factor of price, one needed to ensure that a personal computer was made available for less than Rs 10,000 and a compact modern car for about Rs 50,000. For the sake of technological progress, the disastrous sociological consequences of the colour TV would be but a small price. A modern country must produce TV picture tubes in millions and so it shall be done. After all, the picture tube and microchip were also required for myriad vital uses other than entertainment and indigenous capabilities in these fields must be acquired for the very survival of a sovereign

The numbers were chased relentlessly and potential consumers of electronic goods were enticed by the Japanese finish or the European standards. As electronics kits in semi and completely knockeddown conditions winged their way to Indian airports, many an entrepreneur was tempted to switch from manufacturing to trade. "Screw-driver technology" presented itself as an instrument for making a fast buck. For example, quite a few computer professionals dumped their development and production plans and turned importers and agents for foreign companies. The more "screwdriver technology" was condemned, the more it gained in popularity. The Government itself was a willing patron. As merchants prospered, a section of industry won lered whether the Government would also be easily persuaded by foreign interests to change the country's patent laws, with grave consequences for indigenous technological development. The Government's assertion that it does not intend to fiddle with the intellectual property rights law has not convinced many.

The manufacturing sector could hardly cope with the fast changing fashions and technologies as was demonstrated in the marketplace. No sooner did the simple colour TV sets with some indigenous content started reaching the first customers than the importers unleashed fancier sets with extra knobs and switches. Such kit imports were cleared posthaste while the proposal for the manufacture of glass shells for colour picture tubes was subjected to

interminable official scrutiny.

In the area of consumer electronics, "screw-driver technology" was given the biggest boost before the Asiad in 1982 when Indira Gandhi's Government introduced colour TV on a crash basis. The Indian Ty industry which was given no notice was naturally caught caught unprepared. their agents were delighted by this sudden switch in priorities priorities which was motivated by electoral considerations. A rainbow on the small screen will keep the poor. Reep the people in good mood, it was concluded. Till Vasant Sathe drummed up the danger of the nation being struck "colour-blind", the Government had a struck "colour-blind", the Government had a struck "colour TV was not ment had held the view that colour TV was not

but also the "kit culture" which spawned in no time more than 200 TV "manufacturers".

Under Rajiv Gandhi's new economic policy, duties were slashed, foreign collaborations were made easy, licensing regulation and other constraints were relaxed and foreign investors were asked to approach the Prime Minister's office in case of any problem. Udyog Bhavan buzzed with words such as "automatic capacity expansion" and "broad-banding". The government approvingly watched Indian entrepreneurs taking off in droves to secure from foreign lands knowhow but not know-why for car-wipers and tail lights. The new automobile policy as also the new electronics policy ordained: "The more the merrier".

A cut in duties on the fuel-efficient Maruti-Suzuki and its soaring sales shook the established manufacturers who were hitherto content to grind outdated bearings and pumps. The new policy was supposed to make them change their ways and cease production of obsolete models. The Government provided the impulse for a great automobile show in New Delhi some four years ago when its vision of the new automobile age was presented in psychedelic lights. The prospective car buyers, accustomed to being in the waiting lists for years, were tantalised by female models reclining on the sleekest and shiniest cars from all parts of the world.

The show did not last long. The new automobile policy soon turned into a "No Policy" and the foreign collaborations tap was turned off. The 'two established automobile manufacturers who had ignored the grim warning of "modernise or perish" saw their patience paying. Having seen many governments come and go, they refused to take the prophesies of doom seriously and merely went through the motion of changing a grill here and a light there. They were confident that the government's crusade against obsolescence would run out of steam. They were now grinning.

II

In the context of the modernisation strategy and its pursuit by the Government, one must examine a related issue thrown up by the recent Union Budget which seems to be attempting another cover-up by slowing down modernisation in the name of socialism. Socialism, to all appearances, is being used as an alibi for reversing the earlier policies which are now perceived by the leadership as an electoral liability. But again the approach is ad hoc and superficial. If that were not so, the Government must answer as to why, if it believed that the Maruti deserved to be taxed more, it did not simultaneously plan to promote public transport in a big way. Another luxury item on which it should have imposed penal rates of excise is the fuel-guzzling car which ought to have been pushed off the road in any country aspiring to be modern.

Was there no other way of winning the poor over except by making the TV and radio sets more expensive? The hike in duty on TV sets was only reduced

(Continued on page 63)

Twenty-five years after the death of Jawaharlal Nehru on May 27, 1964, it is time to pause and ponder over the course of human development and the direction that needs to be given to our nation. In that endeavour Nehru's own thinking, his perception and vision, are worth examining. Six years before his death, he published a note in AICC Economic Review (August 15, 1958) captioned "The Basic Approach". Mainstream is reproducing it here as it marks a seminal contribution towards understanding world currents of contemporary times. —Editor

The Basic Approach

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WE have many grave internal problems to face. But a consideration of these internal problems inevitably leads to a wider range of thought. Unless we have some clarity of vision, or, at any rate, are clear as to the questions posed to us, we shall not get out of the confusion that afflicts the world today. I do not pretend to have that clarity of thinking or to have any answers to our major questions. All I can say, in all humility, is that I am constantly thinking about these questions. In a sense I might say that I rather envy those who have got fixed ideas and therefore need not take the trouble to look deeper into the problems of today. Whether it is from the point of view of some religion or ideology, they are not troubled with the mental conflicts which are always the accompaniment of the great ages of transition.

And yet, even though it may be more comfortable to have fixed ideas and be complacent, surely that is not to be commended because that can only lead to stagnation and decay. The basic fact of today is the tremendous pace of change in human life. In my own life I have seen amazing changes, and I am sure that in the course of the life of the next generation these changes will be even greater, if humanity is not overwhelmed and annihilated by an atomic war.

Nothing is so remarkable as the progressive conquest or understanding of the physical world by the mind of man today, and this process is continuing at a terrific pace. Man need no longer be a victim of external circumstances, at any rate to a very large extent. While there

has been this conquest of external conditions, there is at the same time the strange spectacle of a lack of moral fibre and of self-control in man as a whole. Conquering the physical world, he fails to conquer himself.

That is the tragic paradox of this atomic and sputnik age. The fact that nuclear tests continue, even though it is well recognised that they are very harmful in the present and in the future, and the fact that all kinds of weapons of mass destruction are being produced and piled up, even though it is universally recognised that their use may well exterminate the human race, bring out this paradox with startling clarity. Science is advancing far beyond the comprehension of a very great part of the human race and posing problems which most of us are incapable of understanding, much less of solving. Hence the inner conflict and tumult of our time. On the one side, there is this great and overpowering progress in science and technology and of their manifold consequences; on the other, a certain mental exhaustion of civilisation itself.

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Religion comes into conflict with rationalism. The disciplines of religion and social usage fade away without giving place to other disciplines, moral or spiritual. Religion as practised either deals with matters rather unrelated to our normal lives and thus adopts an ivory-tower attitude or is allied to certain social usages which do not fit in with the present age. Rationalism, on the other hand, with all its virtues, somehow appears to deal with the surface of things, without uncovering the inner

tore. Science itself has arrived at a stage school Foundation Catholic and riself a tremendous liberating vast new possibilities and mysteries loom ahead. Matter and energy and spirit seem to overlap.

In the ancient days, life was simple and more in contact with nature. Now it becomes more and more complex and more and more hurried without time for reflection or even for questioning. Scientific developments have produced an enormous surplus of power and energy which are often used for wrong purposes.

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The old question still faces us, as it has faced humanity for ages past: what is the meaning of life? The old days of faith do not appear to be adequate, unless they can answer the questions of today. In a changing world, living should be a continuous adjustment to the changes and happenings. It is the lack of this adjustment that creates conflicts.

The old civilisations, with the many virtues that they possess, have obviously proved inadequate. The new Western civilisation with all its triumphs and achievements and also with its atomic bombs also appears inadequate and therefore the feeling grows that there is something wrong with our civilisation. Indeed, essentially our problems are those of civilisation itself. Religion gave a certain moral and spiritual discipline; it also tried to perpetuate superstition and social usages. Those superstitions and social usages enmeshed and overwhelmed the real spirit of religion. Disillusionment followed.

Communism comes in the wake of this disillusionment and offers some kind of faith and some kind of discipline. To some extent it fills a vacuum. It succeeds in some measure by giving a content to man's life. But in spite of its apparent success, it fails partly because of its rigidity but, even more so, because it ignores certain essential needs of human

There is much talk in communism of the contradictions of capitalist society and there is truth in that analysis. But we see the growing contradictions within the rigid framework of communism itself. Its suppression of individual freedom brings about powerful reactions. Its contempt for what might be called the moral and spiritual side of life not only ignores something the thing that is basic in man but also deprives human behaviour of standards and values. Its unfortunate association with violence encourages a certain evil tendency in human beings.

I have the greatest admiration for many of the achievements of the Soviet Union. Among these great achievements is the value attached to the object achievements are the control of the object achievements are the control of the object achievements are the control of the object achievements of the soviet of the object achievements of the soviet of the object achievements of the soviet of the sovi to the child and the common man. Their systems child and the common man. systems of education and health are probably the heat the best in the world. But it is said, and rightly the model of individual rightly, that there is suppression of individual freedom there. And yet the spread of education

force which ultimately will not tolerate that suppression of freedom. This again is another contradiction. Unfortunately, communism became too closely associated with the necessity for violence and thus the idea which it placed before the world became a tainted one. Means distorted ends. We see the powerful influence of wrong means and methods.

Communism charges the capitalist structure of society with being based on violence and class conflict. I think this is essentially correct, though the capitalist structure itself has undergone and is continually undergoing a change because of democratic and other struggles. The question is how to get rid of inequality and have a classless society with equal opportunities for all. Can this be achieved through methods of violence, or can it be possible to bring about the changes through peaceful methods? Communism has definitely allied itself to the approach of violence. Even if it does not indulge normally in physical violence, its language is of violence, its thought is violent and it does not seek to change by persuasion or peaceful democratic pressures, but by coercion and indeed by destruction and extermination. Fascism has all these evil aspects of violence and extermination in their grossest forms and, at the same time, has no acceptable

This is completely opposed to the peaceful approach which Gandhiji taught us. Communists as well as anti-communists both seem to imagine that a principle can be stoutly defended only by language of violence and by condemning those who do not accept it. For both of them there are no shades, there is only black or white. That is the old approach of the bigoted aspects of some religions. It is not the approach of tolerance of feeling that perhaps others might have some share of the truth also. Speaking for myself, I find this approach wholly unscientific, unreasonable and uncivilised whether it is applied in the realm of religion or economic theory or anything else. I prefer the old pagan approach of tolerance, apart from its religious aspects. But whatever we may think about it, we have arrived at a stage in the modern world when an attempt at forcible imposition of ideas on any large section of people is bound ultimately to fail. In present circumstances this will lead to war and tremendous destruction. There will be no victory, only defeat for everyone. We have seen in the last year or two that it is not easy even for great powers to reintroduce colonial control over territories which have recently become independent. That was exemplified by the Suez incident in 1956. Also what happened in Hungary demonstrated that the desire for national freedom is even stronger than any ideology and cannot ultimately be suppressed. What happened in Hungary was not essentially

a conflict between communism and anti-communism. It represented nationalism striving for freedom from foreign control.

Digitized by Arya Samai Foundation Community when opportunity is given to the individual to develop, provided the individual is not a selected group but comprises the whole community. The touchstone, therefore

Thus violence cannot possibly lead today to a solution of any major problem because violence has become much too terrible and destructive. The moral approach to the question has now been powerfully reinforced by the practical aspect.

If the society which we aim at cannot be brought about by big-scale violence, will smallscale violence help? Surely not, partly because that itself may lead to a big-scale violence and partly because it produces an atmosphere of conflict and of disruption. It is absurd to imagine that in a conflict the socially progressive forces are bound to win. In Germany both the Communist Party and the Social Democratic Party were swept away by Hitler. This may well happen in other countries too. In India any appeal to violence is particularly dangerous because of its inherent disruptive character. The basic thing, I believe, is that wrong means will not lead to right results and that is no longer merely an ethical doctrine but a practical proposition.

Some of us have been discussing this general background and more especially, conditions in India. It is often said that there is a sense of frustration and depression in India and the old buoyancy of spirit is not to be found at a time when enthusiasm and hard work are most needed. This is not in evidence merely in our country. It is in a sense a world phenomenon. An old and valued colleague said that this is due to our not having a philosophy of life, and indeed the world also is suffering from this lack of a philosophical approach. In our efforts to ensure the material prosperity of the country we have not paid any attention to the spiritual element in human nature. Therefore in order to give the individual and the nation a sense of purpose, something to live for and if necessary to die for, we have to revive some philosophy of life and give, in the wider sense of the word, a spiritual background to our thinking.

We talk of a Welfare State and of democracy and socialism. These are good concepts but they hardly convey a clear and unambiguous meaning. Then the question arises as to what our ultimate objective should be. Democracy and socialism are means to an end, not the end itself. We talk of the good of society. Is this something apart from and transcending the good of the individuals composing it? If the individual is ignored and sacrificed for what is considered the good of the society, is that the right objective to have?

It is agreed that the individual should not be so sacrificed and indeed that real social pro-

to the individual to develop, provided the individual is not a selected group but comprises the whole community. The touchstone, therefore, should be how far any political of social theory enables the individual to rise above his petty self and thus think in terms of the good of all. The law of life should not be competition or acquisitiveness but cooperation, the good of each contributing to the good of all. In such a society the emphasis will be on duties, not on rights; the rights will follow the performance of the duties. We have to give a new direction to education and evolve a new type of humanity.

This argument leads to the old Vedantic conception that everything, whether sentient or insentient, finds a place in the organic whole: that everything has a spark of what might be called the divine impulse or the basic energy or life force which pervades the Universe. This leads to metaphysical regions which tend to take us away from the problems of life which face us. I suppose that any line of thought sufficiently pursued leads us in some measure to metaphysics. Even science today is almost on the verge of all manner of imponderables. I do not propose to discuss these metaphysical aspects, but this very argument indicates how the mind searches for something basic underlying the physical world. If we really believed in this all pervading concept of the principle of life, it might help us to get rid of some of our narrowness of race, caste or class and make us more tolerant and understanding in our approaches to life's problems.

But obviously it does not solve any of these problems and, largely, we remain where we were. In India we talk of the Welfare State and socialism. In a sense, every country, whether it is capitalist, socialist or communist, accepts the ideal of the Welfare State. Capitalism, in a few countries at least, has achieved this common welfare to a very large extent, though it has far from solved problems and there is a basic its own lack of something vital. Capitalism allied to democracy has undoubtedly toned down many of its evils and in fact is different now from what it was a generation or two ago. In industrially advanced countries there has been a continuous and steady upward trend of economic development. Even the terrible losses of world war have not prevented this trend in so far as the highly developed countries tries are concerned. Further, this economic development has spread, though in varying degrees, to all classes. This does not apply to countries which are not industrially developed. Indeed in these countries the struggle for development is very difficult and sometimes, in spite of efforts, not only do economic inequalities remain but tend to become worse. Nor mally speaking, it may be said that the forces

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of a capitalist society, if leftigitime he characteristics, we remain poor and, what is more, tend to to make the rich richer and the poor poorer and thus increase the gap between them. This applies to countries as well as groups or regions or classes within the countries. Various democratic processes interfere with these normal trends. Capitalism itself has therefore developed some socialistic features even though its major aspects remain.

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Socialism of course deliberately wants to interfere with the normal processes and thus not only adds to the productive forces but lessens inequalities.

What is socialism? It is difficult to give a precise answer and there are innumerable definitions of it. Some people probably think of socialism vaguely as something which does good and which aims at equality. That does not take us very far. Socialism is basically a different approach from that of capitalism, though I think it is true that the wide gap between them tends to lessen because many of the ideas of socialism are gradually being incorporated in the capitalist structure, Socialism is after all not only a way of life but a certain scientific approach to social and economic problems. If socialism is introduced in a backward and under-developed country, it does not suddenly make it any less backward. then have a backward and poverty-stricken socialism.

Unfortunately many of the political aspects of communism have tended to distort our vision of socialism. Also the technique of struggle evolved by communism has given violence a predominant part. Socialism should therefore be considered apart from these political elements or the inevitability of violence. It tells us that the general character of social, political and intellectual life in a society is governed by its productive resources. As those productive resources change and develop, the life and thinking of the community changes.

Imperialism or colonialism suppressed and suppresses the progressive social forces. Inevitably it aligns itself with certain privileged groups or classes because it is interested in preserving the social and economic status quo. Even after a country has become independent, it may continue to be economically dependent on other countries. This kind of thing is euphemistical mistically called having close cultural and eco-

We discuss sometimes the self-sufficiency of the village. This should not be mixed up with the idease. the idea of decentralisation though it may be a part of: part of it. While decentralisation is desirable to the law. While decentralisation is desirable to the largest possible extent, if it leads to old and rather primitive methods of production, it simply means that we do not utilise modern methods methods which have brought great material advance West. That advance to some countries of the West. That

become poorer because of the pressure of an increasing population. I do not see any way out of the vicious circle of poverty except by utilising the new sources of power which science has placed at our disposal. Being poor, we have no surplus to invest and we sink lower and lower.

We have to break through this barrier by profiting by the new sources of power and modern techniques. But in doing so, we should not forget the basic human element and the fact that our objective is individual improvement and the lessening of inequalities; and we must not forget the ethical and spiritual aspects of life which are ultimately the basis of culture and civilisation and have given some meaning to life.

It has to be remembered that it is not by some magic adoption of socialist or capitalist method that poverty suddenly leads to riches. The only way is through hard work and increasing the productivity of the nation and organising an equitable distribution of its products. It is a lengthy and difficult process. In a poorly developed country, the capitalist method offers no chance. It is only through a planned approach on socialistic lines that steady progress can be attained though even that will take time. As this process continues, the texture of our life and thinking gradually changes.

Planning is essential because otherwise we waste our resources which are very limited. Planning does not mean a collection of projects or schemes but a thought-out approach of how to strengthen the base and pace of progress so that the community advances on all fronts. In India we have a terrible problem of extreme poverty in certain large regions, apart from the general poverty of the country. We have always a difficult choice before us: whether to concentrate on production by itself in selected and favourable areas, thus for the moment rather ignoring the poor areas, or try to develop the backward areas at the same time so as to lessen the inequalities between regions. A balance has to be struck and an integrated national plan evolved. A national plan need not and indeed should not have rigidity. It need not be based on any dogma but should rather take the existing facts into consideration. It may and, I think in present day India, it should encourage private enterprise in many fields though even that private enterprise must necessarily fit in with the national plan and have such controls as are considered necessary.

Land reforms have a peculiar significance because without them, more especially in a highly congested country like India, there can be no radical improvement in productivity in agriculture. But the main object of land

break up the old class structure of a society that is stagnant.

We want social security, but we have to recognise that social security comes only when a certain stage of development has been reached. Otherwise we shall have neither social security nor any development.

It is clear that in the final analysis it is the quality of the human beings that counts. It is man who builds up the wealth of a nation as well as its cultural progress. Hence education and health are of high importance so as to produce that quality in the human beings. We have to suffer here also from the lack of resources, but still we have to remember always that it is right education and good health that will lay the foundation for economic as well as cultural and spiritual progress.

A national plan has thus both a short-term objective and a long-term objective. The longterm objective gives a true perspective. Without it short-term planning is of little avail and will lead us into blind alleys. Planning will always be perspective planning and will be hard in view of the physical achievements for which we strive. In other words, it has to be

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennal and Conditioned by financial resources and conditioned by financial resources and economic conditions,

> The problems which India faces are to some extent common to other countries, but we have new problems for which there are no parallels or historical precedents elsewhere. What has happened in the past in the industrially advanced countries has little bearing on us today. As a matter of fact, the countries that are advanced today were economically better of than India today, in terms of per capita income, before their industrialisation began. Western economics, therefore, though helpful, have little bearing on our present-day problems. So also have Marxist economics which are in many ways out of date even though they throw a considerable light on economic processes. We have thus to do our own thinking, profiting by the example of others, but essentially trying to find a path for ourselves suited to our own conditions.

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In considering these economic aspects of our problems, we have always to remember the basic approach of peaceful means; and perhaps we might also keep in view the old Vedantic ideal of the life force which is the inner base of everything that exists.

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Jawaharlal Nehru and Democratic Socialism

A.K. DAMODARAN

JAWAHARLAL Nehru's conviction that the only acceptable form of political organisation for independent India would have to be on both democratic and socialistic lines was derived from his deep study of the world problems during the 30 years before independence.

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Nehru's university education in Edwardian England at a time when new and hopeful ideals were being talked about with genuine passion by intellectuals in search of social justice within the nation-state and rather vague models of world government were discussed, led to a certain easy familiarity with Labour politics in England and Fabian ideas of evolutionary socialism.

The writings of H.G. Wells, Bernard Shaw and Lionel Curtis had made the idea of socialism familiar in a rather distant manner; it was only a few years before Jawaharlal reached England as a young student that Sir William Harcourt's clever statement "we are all socialists now" made people familiar with the new concepts of state intervention in economic matters.

The much more significant Marxist formulation of the socialist philosophy was still rather remote both in England and in India to which he returned. It needed the revolution in Russia and the dramatic impact of Lenin's ideas on both the organisation of state after revolution and, quite separately, the inevitable relationship between capitalism in the home country of imperialism and the exploitation in the colony to make Jawaharlal a little more aware of the realities of international politics.

There were other influences shaping his political philosophy. He was never comfortable with the acceptance by an earlier generation of Indian intellectuals of liberal democracy with its laissez faire bias. However, he had great admiration for both the crusaders and the practitioners of democracy in Europe and America since the French Revolution. He was particularly impressed by Jefferson whose ideas of particularly impressed by Jefferson whose ideas of democracy appeared to him to be nearer an elusive ideal than earlier manifestos. To complete the picture of these earlier intellectual influences one ces one should not perhaps leave out writings of men like Oscar Wilde who provided an extremely persuasive Oscar Wilde who provided and just persuasive argument for a more rational and just world in a language familiar to Jawaharlal and his contemporations of the state of contemporaries. There is no direct evidence for this but Jaries. There is no direct evidence for this but Jawaharlal's writings in the earlier period, show a constant with the show a certain comfortable familiarity with the wry, self-derivation comfortable familiarity with the wry, self-deprecatory style of the consciously decadent and at the same time aggressively reformist fashionable intellectualism of the Cambridge of

his youth. Wilde, and after him Shaw, were civilising examples of humour and irony being used to change society at a rather gradual pace in a rather genteel fashion.

There was yet another element which would not have escaped a sensitive, a rather withdrawn, studious youngman in those distant early years of the century. The possibility of continuous progress in the human condition due to deliberate efforts by each generation was very much in the air at that time, well before the great war destroyed many illusions, and unsettled some cherished beliefs. All his life Jawaharlal did remain quite consciously a believer in the perfectibility of human society; both democratic liberal and the scientific socialist parts of his personality agreed on the responsibility and the ability of modern man to transform living condition everywhere by righteous indignation and insistent action without losing an essential quality of gentleness and tolerance.

This was a fairly familiar mindset. Many bright young intellectuals and activist politicians of the twenties and the thirties not only in India but in many parts of the world would have had the same conditioning. What distinguished Nehru and gave his personal philosophy a unique quality was the impact of Gandhiji on his thinking and political activity. The experience of working under the direction of the Mahatma at a time when the world was passing through large political and economic upheavals made Nehru acutely sensitive to the nuances of democracy in the Indian context.

By the time he became a major actor in the Indian political scene, Jawaharlal's earlier, rather cerebral, interest in socialist justice had become enriched by Gandhiji's insistence on immediate problems, the redressal of the many palpable injustices which flourished in Indian society. It was during this period also that Jawaharlal studied deeply the historical forces which shaped the modern world. His rather representative, by no means, unusual understanding of the modern world was made more precise to himself when he wrote the Glimpses of World History. By the time he had traversed in his mind the events of the last 200 years he had become convinced about the links between European imperialism, Asian colonialism, slavery in Africa, stagnation in Latin America and poverty in the very rich countries themselves.

This was the setting for the emergence of a fairly coherent philosophy of democratic socialism which Nehru developed in the thirties and in the forties which he attempted to translate into state policy

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in the years after independence. The greatest single influence on his economic thinking in that period was the example of the Soviet plan. He followed the developments in the Soviet Union with great attention and understanding. During his years in jail, he kept in close touch with the literature of modern socialism and national planning beginning with the major writings of Beatrice and Sydney Webb. He became a votary of socialist planning, an ardent advocate of nationalisation of the major means of production according to classic Marxist principles.

At the same time he was also attracted by a parallel development in another part of the world, the great experiment in welfare economics launched by Roosevelt's New Deal. He was particularly influenced by the great river projects in the United States like the Tennessee Valley Authority. These influences can be seen in his determination to have serious exercise in national planning long before independence, an idea which he was able to sell to a reluctant Congress with the help of Subhas Chandra Bose. The National Planning Committee tried to work out an agenda of social justice and increased production within the framework of the legal constraints of a democratic Constitution.

These earlier attempts to chalk out a programme of national planning at a time when political independence was far away read today like a rather charming game plan. It was, however, by no means of marginal interest only. It made the country planconscious; other alternative plans were worked out and published. The idea of State intervention in a rather non-socialist environment became familiar to the intellectuals and the media, at a time when the conditions of war made State control a fact of life.

It is against this background that Jawaharlal's own belief in the inter-relatedness of democracy and socialism in the Indian context has to be understood. He was a nationalist with democratic convictions gradually moving towards socialism. That was the real order of priorities in his own personal picture of the Indian scene whatever might have been the rhetoric of earlier years. He did not see any alternative to the democratic process in a multilingual, large, diffused society like India where there had to be a conscious effort by the rulers and the elite, all the time, to bring back into mainstream unassimilated groups in the outer fringes. At the same time democracy was the only method by which justice, atleast in the future, would be assured to the large majority of the population who had not immediately benefited by independence and who continued to remain in conditions of deprivation.

A democratic constitution based on adult franchise and with an assured, periodic opportunity for the people to register their views was, thus, inevitable. At the same time Jawaharlal knew that the introduction of socialism in its original sense of state ownership of means of production and community control of all utilities would have been unrealistic in a nation which had more pressing preoccupations in caste, communalism and poverty. This is the reason why socialism was not

Digitized by Arya Samai Foundation Chemical and echegooriginal constitution but came later into it in the attenuated term 'socialistic' denoting democracy with social justice, or socialist planning based on democratic premises. This appeared to Nehru and his colleagues the one way of ensuring progress and justice without having to go through the enormous human cost which a more revolutionary programme would have entailed. The Mahalanobis plan based on the pre-war experience of Russia had adapted only some features of the Soviet system. It was, in fact, an intelligent adjustment with the realities of the Indian economy like the poverty of resources, and the absolute need for the government itself to create new resources in the most important new sectors of the economy, particularly heavy industry. The emphasis on the public sector with no indifference at all towards the needs of the private sector became the controlling philosophy.

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At the same time there was nothing doctrinaire about it. Scientific socialism was always in Jawaharlal's mind the ideal. In Indian conditions, however, the Gandhian heritage, and the trusteeship theory could not be wished away. Agrarian reform, thus became a mild enough change accepted happily by the affluent classes in the villages and the elite in the cities. This paradox continues to be with us 25 years after Nehru passed from the scene. He knew all about it; moreover, there was no self-deception. His strategy for fighting the unfair, unhappy status quo in the country was multi-pronged. In the community projects programme taken over from the American example he found a method by which the district administrative system left behind by the British could be transformed into a locomotive for economic change as well as economic development. It was, as experiments go, a flawed success only.

At the other end of the economy, in the great hydro-electric projects in the major industrial plants and also in the brave attempts at creating the foundations of basic and applied science in the country in major institutions, Jawaharlal and his colleagues attempted to devise instruments of modernisation which would, at the same time, strengthen the role of the State in the economy. There was nothing doctrinaire or exclusivist about his approach. The Gandhian element in the Indian agenda was represented by the splendid beginnings of the Vinoba revolution. The Bhoodan Movement was an attempt to supplement State action by individual motivation. An attempt to this would have been possible, as Nehru quite correctly claimed, only in Gandhi's India. Here again, however, the success was inade quate, one can see in retrospect, and was certainly not the beginning of better things.

By the end of the fifties, Jawaharlal had succeeded in imprinting upon the consciousness of the Indian voter, the absolute importance of State action and the socialist ideal in the Indian context. All future changes would have to be undertaken in this frame work. This was also the period when the wildly oscillating changes of policy in the other developing country of modern times, China, made the Nehru approach appear a little more realistic, even a little more scientific than doctrinaire Marxists had seen

in the first years after independence. The great in the first years after independence. The great The Basic Approach was written in the form of a changes in the Soviet Union Radiz by Duryng Some Foundation Chennal and Carpender was written in the form of a changes in the Soviet Union Radiz by Duryng Some Foundation Chennal and Carpender was written in the form of a changes in the Soviet Union Radiz by Duryng Some Foundation Chennal and Carpender was written in the form of a changes in the Soviet Union Radiz by Duryng Some Foundation Chennal and Carpender was written in the form of a changes in the Soviet Union Radiz by Duryng Some Foundation Chennal and Carpender was written in the form of a changes in the Soviet Union Radiz by Duryng Some Foundation Chennal and Carpender was written in the form of a changes in the Soviet Union Radiz by Duryng Some Foundation Chennal and Carpender was written in the form of a changes in the Soviet Union Radiz by Duryng Some Foundation Chennal and Carpender was written in the form of a change of the Carpender was written in the form of a change of the Carpender was written in the form of a change of the Carpender was written in the form of a change of the Carpender was written in the form of a change of the Carpender was written in the form of a change of the Carpender was written in the form of the Carpender was written in the Carpender was written in the form of the Carpender was written in the Carpender was written in the Carpender was written in the form of the Carpender was written in the Carpender was written with the Carpender was written in the Carpender was written with the favoured premises of "scientific" socialism

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From the very beginning Jawaharlal had been car eful enough not to be identified with the "lunatic fringes" of Soviet policy. In the late thirties he had been sensitive enough to the dilemmas created by the show trials. He did not experience the wild changes of mood and belief which some of his fellow socialists in India had after excessess of Stalin became known. His sense of history, his understanding of the dilemmas of decision-making in a beleagured island state in a hostile ideological environment made him understand some of the difficulties of socialism in practice. All these concerns were expressed by Jawaharlal in a famous personal manifesto written in 1958. The article on "The Basic Approach" worries about these things. In a significant passage he encapsulates the dilemmas of the modern statesman faced with the rival claims of democracy and socialism.

"We talk of a Welfare State and of democracy and socialism. These are good concepts but they hardly convey a clear and unambiguous meaning. Then the question arises as to what our ultimate objective should be? Democracy and socialism are means to an end, not the end itself. We talk of the good society. is this something apart from the transcending the good of the individuals composing it? If the individual is ignored and sacrificed for what is considered the good of the society is that the right objective to

have?

"It is agreed that the individual should not be so sacrificed and indeed that real social progress will come only when opportunity is given to the individual to develop, provided the individual is not a selected group but comprises the whole community. The touchstone, therefore, should be how far any political or social theory enables the individual to rise above his petty self and thus think in terms of the good of all.'

This is clear enough. The individual is supreme. Only a particularly unique blend of Marxist thought and Gandhian commitment fused in a creative fashion could have produced this conclusion. Jawaharlal was quite forthright in his expression of admiration for and criticism of the achievements and failures of the Soviet Union. Here is his considered

assessment of the modern socialist state:

I have the greatest admiration for many of the achievements of the Soviet Union. Among these great achievements is the value attached to the child and the common man. There systems of education and health are probably the best in the world. But it is said is said, and rightly, that there is suppression of individual freedom there. And yet the spread of education in all on the spread of education in all one liberating tion in all its forms is itself a tremendous liberating force which force which ultimately will not tolerate that suppression of c. sion of freedom. This again is another contradiction. Unfortunately, communism became too closely associated with clated with the necessity for violence and thus the idea which it placed before the world became a tainted one. Means distorted ends. We see the powerful influence of wrong means and methods."

nomic Review. A few months later, in the first Azad Memorial Lecture on 'India Today and Tomorrow'

Jawaharlal returned to the theme:

"We have deliberately laid down as our objective a socialist pattern of society. Personally, I think that the acquisitive society, which is the base of capitalism, is no longer suited to the present age. We have to evolve a higher order more in keeping with modern trends and conditions and involving not so much competition but much greater cooperation. We have accepted socialism as our goal not only because it seems to us right and beneficial but because there is no other way for the solution of our economic problems. It is sometimes said that rapid progress take place by peaceful and democratic methods. I do not accept this proposition. Indeed, in India today any attempt to discard democratic methods would lead to disruption and would thus put an end to any immediate prospect of progress.

"The mighty task thus we have undertaken demands the fullest cooperation from the masses of our people. The change we seek necessitates burdens on our people, even on those who can least bear them; unless they realise that they are partners in the building of a society which will bring them benefits, they will not accept these burdens or give their full

co-operation.'

It is interesting to remember that the immediate reaction in the world of "scientific socialism" to this rather courageous attempt to redefine issues in a developing society was one of suspicion and hostility. Official Marxist reaction was polite but critical, accusing Nehru of straying into humanistic weakness from earlier clearly-held principles. Electicism has always been a bad word to the leaders of any establishment, religious or apolitical; the Vatican and the Kremlin distrust too receptive an attitude towards alien doctrines.

Today, 30 years later, The Basic Approach continues to be classic prescription for ensuring social progress and economic justice without the loss of political freedom in the chaotic conditions of a developing society. Attempts at one party dictatorship devised to accelerate socialism have failed in most cases. Even the more institutionalised, more principled socialist systems like those in China and Eastern Europe have learnt the need for more democracy in the party, in the state apparatus, in industry and in agriculture, that is, on the plant floor and in the collective farm, for genuine improvement.

The new thinking and the attempt at restructuring and openness which is now sweeping through Soviet Union and, hopefully in Eastern Europe represents an acknowledgement of the continuing relevance of these concerns of thirty years ago. Today, Gorbachev talks about the importance of the iudividual; he takes over the Greek idea that man is the measure of all things. He accepts and develops with a certain gusto the Indian, Gandhian, principle that non-violence should be the basis of community life. The most successful, the most highly institutionalised socialist State in the world is now trying to democratise itself,

MAINSTREAM May 27, 1989

on the laws of the market place and the principles of free enterprise are gradually accepting the inevitability of State control to prevent injustice and the exploitation of group by group. After a decade of angry rhetoric, both systems are again slowly converging towards each other. It is not going to be a simple affair. There is going to be no specific, all-country prescription. None realised this more sensitively than Jawaharlal Nehru.

Nehru did not set himself out to be a prophet for the world, either for the future or even more modestly his own generation. He saw himself in human terms as a leader trying to impose some sort of pattern on a wild chaotic society whose gifted people were trying to live down centuries of exploitation and create a new world, not necessarily brave or powerful but basically decent. He carefully distinguished himself from Gandhiji whom he regarded as a prophet, an irresistible personal force in history, a rare individual who comes once or twice only in a millennium and who is not concerned with the practical problems and the details and the compromises which worry the political leader.

The experience of Indian democracy in practice demonstrates that Jawaharlal was fundamentally correct in his analysis; his prescriptions were provisional, based upon the technological and economic environment in the 'fifties and rooted in the ideas he

In a reciprocal gesture many democracies, tides of self-education. All that has happened period of self-education. All that has happened since then, both in the world and in India, the electronic revolution with its impact both on national economies and their international links and also on the conditioning of the human mind in the masses have only served to underline the essential appositeness of democratic socialism in our large, still imperfectly organised nation-state. We know today with greater physical immediacy than in Jawaharlal Nehru's time that democracy without socialism leads inevitably to intolerable deprivation and social injustice. It also leads to a self-serving, ruling class untrue both to its ancient traditions and unequal to its modern responsibilities.

Socialism without democracy has also been tried and found wanting: it leads to political oppression. economic stagnation and nothing less than the alienation of the individual in conditions of anomy, Many of the alternative prescriptions for social action and economic organisation have failed. Jawaharlal Nehru's patient, serious search for a viable solution to the problems of the twentieth century society in the nuclear age has to be continued by his successors with the same sincerity and firmness of purpose. In doing so we should never forget that the ineluctable pre-condition for such creative action is a democratic culture and not merely demo-

cratic institutions.

Haryana Backward Classes Kalyan Nigam Limited

S.C.O. 813-814, SECTOR 22-A, Chandigarh

Haryana Backward Classes Kalyan Nigam was registered in December, 1980 with an authorised share capital of Rs. 2 crores to ameliorate the socio-economic conditions of the member of the Backward Classes. The share capital of the Nigam was subsequently increased to Rs. 4 crores during the year 1983-84. Now it has been increased to Rs. 5 crores.

The Nigam strives to identify and provide financial assistance to beneficiaries through its own resources and largely through those of Commercial Banks in various professions in different sectors - Agriculture, Industry, Trade and Business. It encourages self-employment through loans and vocational training for employment. Maximum amount of loan admissible is Rs. 1.50 lakhs and the rate of interest is charged from 6 to 12 per cent per annum.

Since the inception of this Nigam, loans amounting to Rs. 415.87 lakhs have been disbursed to 27,680 beneficiaries up to March 31, 1989. The Nigam is waiving off loans due/outstanding upto March 3, 1986 amounting to Rs. 159.03 lakhs covering 14,943 beneficiaries.

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S. P. BHATIA, IAS, MANAGING DIRECTOR

Nation-Building, Science and Technology

BALDEV SINGH

Science and Technology are a vast subject. The limited questions to which one would like to address oneself is: what role have science and technology, to which Jawaharlal Nehru gave such powerful support, played in nation-building? Has this role been significant? If not, what have been the reasons, and can they play any significant role at all?

My understanding is that socially and economically, India stands divided. The main dividing

factors are the following:

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First, the great divide between the haves and the have-nots, the urban and the rural elite and the rural poor, the tribals and the other disadvantaged sections. The latter constitute almost fifty per cent of the population

Second, the divide between different sections of the Indian society, based on religion, caste and such

other considerations.

So far as the first divide, between the haves and have-nots, is concerned, it is doubtful if Indian science and technology have played any substantial role in bridging the economic gap. They might have even accentuated it. The reasons are as follows:

(i) the character of the Indian scientific community, which mostly belongs to the elitist class;

(ii) the language barrier — the Indian scientific community thinks and communicates in a foreign

(iii) orientation of the Indian science and technology programmes which mostly reflect linkages with and are suited to the societal needs of the Western industrialised countries; and lastly

(iv) the poor receptive capacity of the have-nots due to illiteracy, social backwardness, etc.

The recent call to the scientists by the Prime Minister that Indian science should be a world leader in some areas of science and technology, is

likely to accentuate this trend further. Of the above-listed reasons, the language barrier is the most crucial. The have-nots cannot be brought into the framework, nor benefit from science and technol technology, unless this is brought to them in their own language. Recently, I had occasion to address some for some forty or more organisations in various States

The author, a noted scientist who retired from the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, has worked in UNCTAD organisations. This article is based on the speech he delivered at a semiseminar on "Nation-Building, Development Process and Communication: A Search for India's Renaise State of Search for India's Renaissance" in New Delhi, December 3 to 7,

engaged in doing work on popularisalion of science in rural and tribal areas. Almost half of them exist only on paper, the others are undertaking and uphill task with totally inadequate resources. Their objectives are noble, their impact insignificant.

A major effort backed with adequate resources is required to bring science and technology to the have-nots in their languages, that is the languages of the various States at all levels of education and other activities. At the moment, I am not going into the question of education itself. Suffice it to say that the way the content of the courses is framed makes them totally unsuitable for the rural sections, even for the urban poor. Unless the Indian scientists and technologists think, work and communicate in their language, the divide will remain and perhaps widen. Unless the language barrier is overcome, the have-nots will not be participants in and doubtful beneficiaries of the science and technology programmes.

The Second Divide, between different religious and caste entities cuts across even the economic sections. I believe science has a great role to play in providing a solution to this problem. In fact, science and the scientific method are the only means which can possibly do so. It is often observed that linguistically and culturally, the youth are getting increasingly alienated from the national cultural ethos. Not many in the younger group, in the teens and twenties have a taste for Bharat Natyam or the classical ragas of Bhimsen Joshi and the Dagar brothers. The kathas, kirtans and the teachnigs of the religious mendicants leave them cold. The fare offered is back to the value system of the tribal days, of Ramayana, Mahabharata or even the Vedas. In the case of some of the minority religions, the revivalism is to resurrect and demand conformance to the codes prescribed and frozen in sacred books of hundreds of years back. Tying a Barnala to a tree and putting a placard round his neck is revivalism at its most ridiculous. According to the Indian Express, after seeing Ramayana on the television, a husband forced his wife to Agni Priksha to prove her chastity and burnt her. If this is the choice. the urban youth will opt for a more scientifically oriented Western culture, including Jazz and whatnot! The rural poor and the illiterate will sink further into the revivalist quagmire, to become easy victims of the unscrupulous politicians. A society which permits its women to be burnt alive as Sati. tolerates animal and even human sacrifice, and treats a section of society as 'Untouchables', would be impervious to social transformation through science and technology.

to this socio-cultural problem. With the help of Geology, Archeology, Anthropology, Carbon-dating and other modern techniques, India's ancient history should be properly analysed. Codes, social practices, traditions and sacrificial rituals belonging to the periods of the great Indian epics, sacred books and mythologies should be investigated and set against the production and socio-economic systems of those times. Kosambi ascribes the practice of Sati to the change from the matriarchal to the patriarchal system. He writes: "Widow-burning can only have developed from suppression of the matriarchal tradition, presumably as a warning or precaution against its surreptitious revival" (Myth & Reality, p. 80). Science and scientific method should distil reality from the myth and help evolve a value system which has linkages with our past but is appropriate to the conditions of the present.

During the deliberations on different aspects of nation-building, two trends appear to emerge. First, social transformation in India cannot and should not be divorced from Indian tradition and cultural values. Second, religion should be separated from politics. Forty years back the Indian Constituent Assembly had considered a resolution to exclude communal parties from the electoral process. It could not be done. There is again a talk of banning communal parties. It may be done, if possible. But, how are we going to ban communalism within the so-called secular parties, especially since the cancer has spread into the body-politic? To the best of my knowledge, our Prime Minister did not ring temple bells or worship at yagnas in his days when he was a pilot. The great Tilak derived his strength through public association with Ganapati Puja.

Gandhiji opposed separation of religion from politics ience and technology.

Digitized by Arya Samai Foundation Chapmailant e Gairgoth ould take away the moral Scientific method and approach must be applied approach aspect.

We as Indians can be proud as inheritors and successors of one of the most ancient civilisations in the world, enriched through synthesis with cultures and traditions of many other lands. Mohenjo Daro flourished at least Harappa civilisations two to three thousand years BC. The Indus Valley civilisation, the Aryans, Greeks, Persians, Moghuls and the British have added and enriched the variety of India's religious and cultural traditions. If we take a broad enough view, then irrespective of different religious denominations, we are common inheritors of these religious and cultural traditions. A number of customs, rituals, myths, superstitions and codes belong to the primitive days of the tribal past, when man had to battle against animals of the jungle and forces of nature without the aid of science and technology.

We must have the courage and the wisdom to analyse our religious and cultural traditions - firmly reject what is irrelevant to the present scientific era, and synthesise what is relevant with the present scientific thought. We may thus generate a new and vibrant Indian culture which may be accepted by our youth and save them from alienation. This is a task which Indian scientists, following in the tradition of Meghnad Saha and D.D. Kosambi can

undertake.

If Indian society can undergo a social transformation it will have its impact on our neighbouring countries and societies. It is unlikely that Benazir Bhutto could have succeeded in becoming Prime Minister in the Mullah-ridden social set-up of Pakistan, if Indira Gandhi had not preceded her as Prime Minister in India.

P.N. HAKSAR

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Development and Communication

MOCKERY OF NEHRU'S VISION

G.N.S. RAGHAVAN

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An Inclusive Vision of India's Renaissance

There are no exact repetitions in the course of human history, only analogous situations in vastly different circumstances. The Indian renaissance which began early in the 19th century with Rammohun Roy and has been bogged down for three decades after the decline and passing away of Jawaharlal Nehru, is both like and unlike the European renaissance of the 14th to the 16th centuries.

The European renaissance was marked by new discoveries as well as rediscovery of the old. Navigators found new sea routes, scientists invented the printing press and gunpowder, and astronomers extended the frontiers of knowledge of the universe in which the planet we inhabit is a tiny speck. There was, alongside, a rediscovery of the heritage of ancient Greek literature. It inspired many writers in the languages of Europe, which now shook off the dominance of Latin and came into their own. Reformation of the Christian Church took place alongside the Renaissance, and a bourgeois democratic revolution followed in the nation-states of Europe.

In contrast to the European renaissance which was accomplished, by young and puissant nations, the Indian renaissance marked the reawakening of an ancient civilisation which had fallen on evil days. It is interesting to speculate on the course that India's history might have taken had Shah Jahan been succeeded by his eldest son, Dara Shikoh. Averse to the mullabs, Dara Shikoh had a friendly interest in Sufic Islam and in the Hindu scriptures. He might have carried forward the work of Akbar and established an integrated society and what we call these days a secular state. As it actually happened, the fanatical and ruthlessly ambitious Aurangzeb ascended the Mughal throne in 1658 after imprison-

The author, a well-known figure in the media world, was Secretary of the Second Press Commission, and taught at the Indian Institute of Mass Communication as Professor of Development Communication. This contribution is taken from the paper he submitted to the National held in New Delhi (December 1988).

ing his father and having Dara Shikoh condemned as a heretic and executed. Aurangzeb's reimposition of the poll tax on Hindus and alienation of the Rajputs weakened the Mughal empire and facilitated the European conquest of India. The British rulers exploited the sense of separateness between Hindus and Muslims to weaken the nationalist movement—a policy which culminated in the sub-continent's partition.

Best of the Old and the New: The herald of the Indian renaissance, Raja Rammohun Roy, exemplified the more constructive and creative of the two responses of Indians to the Western impact. The reactionary response was to reject the new scientific and political thought brought by English education, and withdraw into the shell of traditional beliefs and ways of life. The progressive response was to accept the best values of Western civilisation while retaining what is precious in our own heritage and purifying it of the dross of superstition and cruel custom.

The work of social renewal initiated by Rammohun Roy was continued by a succession of remarkable men and women all over the country—reformers and patriots, including writers in the various regional languages of India. Outstanding among those who took forward the Indian renaissance were Rabindranath Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi, Subramania Bharati and Jawaharlal Nehru.

All the four shared Rammohun Roy's acceptance of the good in the new as well as the good in the old, though with differences of nuance. Rammohun Roy, who was proficient in Sanskrit and Persian besides English, advocated the acquisition of modern knowledge through English. Arguing against the proposed opening of a new Sanskrit college in Calcutta, he said in a letter to Governor-General Amherst in 1823 that it would only "impart such knowledge as is already current in India". He urged that, instead, the government should "promote a more liberal and enlightened system of instruction embracing mathematics, natural philosophy, chemistry, anatomy, with other useful sciences." If Rammohun Roy's optimism about science sounds somewhat naive, we should remember that he wrote this a century-and-a-quarter before Hiroshima and a century-and-a-half before Bhopal and Chernobyl.

Rabindranath Tagore, poet and internationalist, recognised that science could contribute to man's well-being. But he cautioned against the danger of man becoming the slave of machines: "I preach

of hugeness, the non-human.'

Gandhiji was not against the application of science and technology so long as it served to increase productivity without impairing human employment. But he had a fundamental distrust of industrialism. He held till the end to the view he expressed as early as in 1911, in Hind Swaraj. The message of this booklet has been summed up by Prof. K. Swaminathan in these words: "If the Indian masses were to have a life of dignity and moral worth, it was necessary that India be morally as well as politically free. What were the marks of moral slavery? Machinery and the rise of the professional classes...who... joined hands with the British in exploiting the masses and, in imitation of their masters, introduced ways of life which pampered the body and starved the soul." This could be Gandhiji's comment to today's commercial advertising over Doordarshan which unashamedly displays, in a country which has the world's largest concentration of the destitute, the luxury goods and services made available to a privileged few by the elitist pattern of development promoted in recent decades by the ruling middle and upper classes.

Bharati was a poet at once of patriotism, social transformation, and inter-religious understanding. In his widely sung Tamil poems he affirmed that the country's liberation would mean freedom for the lowliest of low castes, and that women were entitled to education and self-development equally with men. Bharati greeted the Russian Revolution of 1917, and sang in praise of Allah and Jesus as well as Siva and Krishna, Sakti and Saraswati.

Jawaharlal Nehru began, like Rammohun Roy, as an optimist about industrialisation. Its defects, he thought, could be cured by socialism. By the late 'fifties, however, he saw that both capitalist and socialist societies shared the same industrial culture and faced the same challenge of life values: "A life divorced from nature, and more and more dependent upon mechanical devices, begins to lose its savour. Moral and spiritual disoiplines break up."

Unlike Rammohun Roy, Tagore and Gandhiji, it was somewhat late in life that Jawaharlal Nehru appreciated the desirability of invoking the positive elements in our cultural heritage in support of India's renaissance. He confesses, in a letter of August 10, 1934 to his sister Vijaya Lakshmi on the subject of education, that his knowledge of the Indian heritage was inadequate: "Two vital issues have to be faced. One: should the education be a completely class education separating the pupil and creating a barrier between him or her and the great mass of the people? Two: What part should the national genius have in the education... As for the second issue, I do not mean the teaching of aggressive and blind nationalism. But I do feel that a person who cuts himself off from the cultural genius of the country he lives in, creates a barrier which makes it difficult for him to function there effectively. Even the breaker of old custom must approach his job as an insider, not an outsider... I realise the value of both these vital points because I have myself suffered, and still suffer, in regard to both of them.'

the freedom of man from the servicude of the same foundation Chenna years of 1942-45) and discussions the freedom of man from the servicude of the same foundation the freedom of man from the servicude of the same foundation (1942-45) and discussions the freedom of man from the servicule of the same foundation (1942-45) and discussions the freedom of man from the servicule of the same foundation (1942-45) and discussions the freedom of man from the servicule of the same foundation (1942-45) and discussions the servicule of the same foundation (1942-45) and discussions the same foundation (1942-45) and discussions the same foundation (1942-45). nagar Fort prison (1942-45), and discussions with his distinguished fellow-detenus, that Jawaharlal became an 'insider'. The Discovery of India which he wrote in 1944 bears testimony to the change. In page after page he approvingly quotes statements by Swami Vivekananda such as: "Become an occidental of occidentals in your spirit of equality, freedom, work, and energy, and at the same time a Hindu to the very backbone in religious culture and instincts." And: "I see in my mind's eye the future perfect India rising out of this chaos and strife, glorious and invincible, with Vedanta brain and Islam body."

Cultural roots having been struck, Jawaharlal Nehru's vision of development became remarkably inclusive. It comprehended spirituality as a leaven for both science and socialism, as well as women's

equality and human ecology.

He writes on ecology with prescience, as early as in The Discovery of India: "Science gives power but remains impersonal, purposeless, and almost unconcerned with our application of the knowledge it puts at our disposal. It may continue its triumphs and yet, if it ignores nature too much, nature may

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play a subtle revenge upon it."

Unlike the racial and male chauvinism of many leaders of the bourgeois democratic revolution in Europe and the USA, whose concept of equality was limited to Whites and among whites to men only, the freeing of women from subjection has been part of the Indian renaissance. Jawaharlal said in a Foreword to Travel Talk (a collection of essays by Aruna Asaf Ali) in 1947: "Among the many strange things that have happened in India during this quarter of a century, perhaps the most notable is the emergence of Indian womanhood. Large numbers of Indian women have played an important role in our struggle for freedom. Many of them have stood out by their ability, capacity for organisation and self-sacrifice for a cause. This fact, more than any other, demonstrates the renaissance of the Indian people and the strong foundations on which we have built our movement for freedom.

Jawaharlal Nehru's mature thought on the relationship of science, socialism and ethical values found the finest expression in the first Azad Memorial Lecture he delivered in 1959. Noting that both the Western powers and the Communist powers "tend to move in the same direction and both are governed by the advance of science and technology", he said: "We see the effects of these rapid technological changes more especially in young men and women today. In extreme cases there is a tendency to criminality, alcoholism, destructiveness, eroticism, in addition to a cynical and negative attitude towards life and work...

"Poverty is a degradation, and the obvious reaction is to get rid of it. To talk of freedom in poverty is almost a contradiction in terms. But too much wealth and affluence, whether in an individual or individual or a society, has also its attendant evils which are becoming evident today.

piling up of material riches manutheady toya american when and example the inner life of man. There is a danger that coased the inner life of man. There is a danger that coased the inner life of man. There is a danger that ness in the inner life of man. There is a danger that socialism, while leading to affluence and even equitable distribution, may still miss some of the significant features of life. It is largely for this reason that stress becomes necessary on the individual...

"Can we combine the progress of science and technology with the progress of the mind and spirit also? We cannot be untrue to science, because that represents the basic facts of life today. Still less can we be untrue to those essential principles for

which India has stood through the ages."

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Jawaharlal Nehru's vision of the good society, so much richer and more comprehensive than what it was at the time of the European renaissance or at the beginning of the 19th century, illustrates the fact that each human generation has the advantage of being able to stand on the shoulders of all previous generations.

II

Inequity in Development and Communication

Between the vision and the reality fell a shadow, even in Jawaharlal Nehru's time. One reason was that he got no help from the progressive forces of the Left. The Communists, who had alienated themselves from the national mainstream by their People's War policy and opposition to the Quit India struggle, swung to the other extreme and refused to recognise that India had become politically free in August 1947. Even the non-Communist Left was doctrinaire. Ignoring the advice of Gandhiji, Jawaharlal Nehru and Maulana Azad, members of the Congress Socialist Party left the parent organisation in 1948, imagining that they could offer a Socialist alternative. This had the effect of making Nehru, to some extent, a prisoner of conservative elements in the Congress.

Perhaps Nehru could have accomplished more if he had created, and taken personal charge of, a Ministry for the Eradication of Poverty and Illite-Tacy. He took instead the portfolio of External Affairs to which he applied a large part of his time and attention. But it is pointless to hold it against Jawaharlal Nehru that his reach exceeded his grasp. It is more profitable to remind ourselves of the best insights and endeavours of the great dead than

to regret shortfalls in their achievement. An attempt is made in the pages that follow to examine the distortions which have vitiated the development process and prevented the fruition of the Indian renaissance. The analysis is from the perspective of a large pective of communication, understood in a large sense to include not only the mass media with their news and news and views and advertising messages but formal education generated education, the political communication generated and the attitudes formed by the constitutional, electoral electoral and administrative arrangements that have prevailed so far; and interpersonal communication by official by official extension agents, party cadres and volunlary Workers.

Elitist Developments: The middle and upper classes

ceased to share the pre-independence vision of India's renaissance which was carried into the years after freedom by Jawaharlal Nehru's concept of economic development with equitable distribution and social justice. They aspire instead to miximising their own access to the amenities of affluent life as it is lived in the industrially advanced countries of the West.

The dominance of the upper and middle classes is due to the persistence of the colonial heritage of mass poverty and mass illiteracy. This is in turn attributable to the absence of sustained political education and mobilisation of the masses by cadres even of political parties which profess socialist aims. There is little of class war between the have-nots and the haves, but much of intra-class fighting between different sections of the privileged to secure for themselves a larger slice of the national cake: the urban versus the rural propertied; public sector personnel who want all the privileges available to government employees, and vice versa; State government staff who want the same wages and perquisites as their Central government counterparts; college teachers who are looked after by the University Grants Commission and newspaper employees for whom there are periodic wage boards; and organised blue-collar workers in the large-scale sector of private industry who are indistinguishable from the white collar middle class in their aspiration for the good life perceived as the possession of material goods and access to English-medium education for their children as the key to an even better life.

The occupants of these islands of well-being in the ocean of Indian poverty get dearness allowance to compensate for increases in the cost of living, house rent allowance, medical expense reimbursement, leave with pay, leave travel concession, bonus, as well as pension and/or gratuity. Their dearness allowance gets revised at least every six months. In contrast, agricultural labourers get no such perquisites. Their minimum wages are miserably low. The Minimum Wages Act of 1948 called for review of the rates at five-yearly intervals, or a rise by fifty points in the cost-of-living index. It was only in 1980 that a conference of Labour Ministers recommended a two-yearly revision. In contrast, the Central Government decided in July 1981 that dearness allowance should be revised every quarter in the case of working journalists and other news-

paper employees.

Elitist development is symbolised by the proliferation of multi-star hotels — in the public sector as well as the private. The roads of the Indian capital are checked with individually owned motor vehicles. They include the Maruti car, and several brands of two-wheel scooters, produced in the publid sector. Guzzling imported petroleum and polluting the atmosphere, they cause many deaths and maimings in road accidents. Those of the middle class who have no access to the use of a chauffeur-driven car owned by the government, a company, academic body or other institution feel constrained to buy, with money acquired by fair means or foul, a car or a two-wheel scooter to avoid the nightmare of bus crowded like cattle in buses, with the women passensuffer indecent harassment in gers having to addition.

Yet the urban as well as the rural poor respond to emotional appeals made to them by competing groups of the ruling classes, in the name of religion, caste, ethnic origin or language. Class distinctions get blurred by the solidarity invoked on the ground of these vertical social groupings. The bottom layers of each of the groupings are used as cannon fodder in the intra-class war of the elite. India is no exception to the ultimate vertical solidarity of the nationstate being invoked by those in power in a country when they are under severe pressure from internal contradictions, in the name of an imaginary, or real but exaggerated, external threat.

As Development, So Communication: There is a symbiotic relationship between development and communication. Each reinforces the other. One might say, 'As development, so communication',

and the other way round.

Doordarshan is the counterpart of the Maruti car. Both serve members of the ruling classes, with Doordarshan serving additionally as a propaganda organ of the political party, and more especially the

Prime Minister, for the time being in power.

The scenario of development and communication in India presents a combination of the worst features of several systems. Whereas decades of the growth of trade unionism and social consciousness in Britain and America have resulted in unemployment insurance and old age pension, giving 20th century capitalism a human face in the West, the living and working conditions of India's toiling masses are those of early capitalism and feudal serfdom. Yet the advertising of luxury goods and services for the top crust of society in the Indian mass media is exactly as in the affluent West. Such advertising adds insult to the injury done to the poor. To cap this, the use made of Indian radio and television for political image-building and propaganda closely resembles the use of the official media in one-party regimes, whether communist or plain militarist.

Stoking the Fires of Consumerism: Both Gandhiji and Jawaharlal Nehru were repelled by commercial advertising. It feeds the consumerist appetite and, while doing so, often transgresses good taste and, in societies where purchase decisions are controlled by the male, violates the dignity of womanhood.

Opposed to the multiplication of wants (as distinct from needs), Gandhiji expressed the wish (Young India, October 1919) that "there were, for each province, only one advertising medium - not a newspaper — containing innocent, unvarnished notices of things useful for the public."

Jawaharlal Nehru did not go so far as to want advertisements to be excluded from newspapers. But he was strongly against coarse advertisements. In an address to the all India Newspaper Editors' Conference at Allahabad on February 16, 1946 he said: "The quality of advertisements appearing in some newspapers sometimes pains me. I appeal to the editors that they should exercise a strict censorship over advertisements so that undesirable advertise-

travel. The rest who must use printed by a women passen. During the seventeen years of Nehru's prime ministership there were no commercials on All India Radio. Referring to advertisements carried by Radio Ceylon and other foreign broadcasting systems. Nehru said at a seminar in New Delhi on February 17, 1963: "Personally I react strongly if an advertisement comes through radio. My reaction is never to encourage that advertiser. What does he mean by interfering with my peace of mind? It angers me when it suddenly comes in; it upsets me. But that is not the reaction of most others, I suppose. Otherwise why should advertisers advertise?" The question of commercial advertising on television did not arise in Nehru's time because there was but one TV centre, established in Delhi in 1959, and it telecast only educational programmes for community viewing in some schools and villages in and around the

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The situation changed soon after Nehru's death in Unlike him, his successors felt the need to 1964. project their own image through radio, and subsequently television, and to disseminate news selected and slated for the purpose. This public relations effort was undertaken as a counter to the Press. Several newspapers with a large circulation criticised Indira Gandhi's policies from a conservative standpoint, as at the time of the nationalisation of banks and abolition of princes' privy purses. This was in 1969, when she decided to adopt a populist platform to mount her revolt against the older guard who controlled the Congress. Some other newspapers were critical of the government from a radical standpoint. They carried news -- of rural poverty and exploitation, corruption in the administration, and the like - which was unflattering to the government. The Press had been critical in similar fashion, both from the Right and the Left, in Nehru's time too, but he did not mind.

Misuse of Electronic Media: The easiest way to stimulate the purchase of radio sets and to promote listening was to provide more and more of popular film music. The resulting increase in the radio audience attracted the interest of advertisers. Radio commercials were first broadcast by the Bombay stations of AIR in November 1967, and so on by other stations. A typical commercial jingle was, "Mummy, Mummy, Modern Bread!" It reflected the imitative change of life-style among the middle and upper classes. Children in the majority of Indian families neither eat packaged and branded bread, nor do they

'mummy' their mothers.

The Delhi TV centre began to run a regular service entertainment of entertainment and news for urban viewers in 1965, and six more centres were established in various parts of the country between 1972 and 1975. commercials were inaugurated on January 1, 1976, and over the and over the years advertising has become a money spinner for Decederation spinner for Doordarshan. On March 23, 1981, in an address to a joint address to a joint conference of officers of the Central Bureau of Investigation Bureau of Investigation and of State anti-corruption agencies, Mrs. Gandhi referred to "the constant the vision of the residual to the vision of t emphasis, of the media on material goods, the vision of the comforts enion of the comfor of the comforts enjoyed in advanced societies, as being among the fact. being among the factors that contribute to corrup-

Doordarshan's advertising practice.

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The Second Press Commission in its report of 1982 drew a distinction between different categories of advertisements: "It was recognised that classified advertisements relating to employment, matrimony, housing and the like serve a useful function but a considerable part of display advertising was prodigal and had to be curtailed." The Commission noted the dangers of promoting luxury consumption in a developing country: "The glossy magazines and the glossiest of advertisements in the Press - of jeans and soft drinks, cigarettes and cosmeties, air travel or entertainment in five-star hotels (not a few of them in the nublic sector) - are directed at the newly affluent and their children. We are of the view that the Press must address itself to the question of what contribution it is making to the strengthening of the moral fabric of society, and discouragement of the trend towards conspicuous and excessive consumption which a developing country can ill afford."

Citing with approval the above remarks of the Press Commission, the Working Group on Software for Doordarshan said in its report (1983): "If privately published newspapers, which must pay their way through circulation and advertising revenue, should address themselves to the propriety of promoting consumerism in a developing country, surely Doordarshan which is subsidised by the taxpayers (including the millions who pay excise duties on matches, bidies and kerosene but have no access to television) also should...The social effects of commercials have to be considered...The advertising on Doordarshan is overwhelmingly of consumer goods and services which should, in the Indian context, be

classified as luxuries."

Instead of Doordarshan relying less on advertisement revenue and more on increased fees, the opposite has been the case. While the price of the poor man's post-card has been trebled over the years, the annual licence fee for a television set remained unchanged at Rs 50 and has recently been abolished.

The search for a larger television audience in order to increase the income from commercials, as well as the exposure to political image-building, has led to a depressing of cultural standards and the screening of culturally alien foreign serials (what the Working Group described as "a self-invited cultural invasion from the West") in order to fill out tele-cast time. The third-rate feature films chosen for telegast. telecast and the song-and-dance sequences compiled therefrom the report said, "are an assault on aesthetic sensibility and brutalistic sensibility and have a vulgarising and brutalising effect on viewers." Nothing daunted, Doordarshan is off the same.

darshan is offering the TV viewer more of the same.
Unlike available Unlike television which is a medium available predominantly to the middle and upper classes, radio is accessible also to the lower middle class. All India Radio stations originate programmes in the local languages, unlike the television network in which most es, unlike the television network in which most of the transmitters relay programmes beamed with the transmitters relay programmes beamed via satellite from Delhi. But even radio is yet to develop the dimension of local, district-level broadcasting oriented to providing development information, specially on the employment generation

But this perception madegriced in crease and poverty alleviation schemes, to the rural poor in their own dialects.

What is the remedy for the culturally corrosive influence of advertising through the electronic media, using the term 'advertising' to cover both commercial messages and the image-building of those

in political power at the Centre?

The remedy does not lie in conceding the demand voiced by some non-Congress State governments that a second TV channel should be opened in the programme-originating Doordarshan centres, and handed over for use by the State governments. It will only compound the damage by making this medium a plaything in the hands of competing political parties.

The true remedy was suggested as far back as in 1978 by a Working Group on Autonomy for Akashvani and Doordarshan, of which the chairman was B. G. Verghese. The Group recommended in its report the establishment of a National Broadcast Trust with full autonomy and a charter defining its responsibilities. This was what Jawaharlal Nehru envisaged. Speaking in parliament on March 15, 1948 he said: "My own view of the set-up for broadcasting is that we should approximate as far as possible to the British model, the BBC. That is to say, it would be better if we had a semi-autonomous corporation. I think we should aim at that, even

though we may have difficulties."

Salutary Role of the Press: Both Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru utilised the medium of the Press for communicating with the people. They did so by publishing newspapers of their own and by making public speeches and issuing statements which were 'news'. Gandhiji cautioned against dependence on leaden type and printing machinery. At the height of the non-cooperation movement he wrote (Young India, January 1922): "The pen is our foundary and the hands of willing copyists our printing machine. Let us use the machine and the type whilst we can, to give unfettered expression to our thoughts. But let us not feel helpless when they are taken away from us by a 'paternal' government, watching and controlling every combination of types and every movement of the printing machine. But the handwritten newspaper is, I admit, a heroic remedy meant for heroic times." More than fifty years later, in free India, a 'material' government made it necessary for brave spirits to take recourse to handwritten or typed and cyclo-styled underground newspapers during the internal emergency and censorship of 1975-76.

Jawaharlal Nehru wanted the Press to have untrammelled freedom, after independence as before. He wanted newspapers to be free both of government control and of manipulation by money power. He told the All India Newspaper Editors' Conference at New Delhi on December 1950: "I have no doubt that even if the government dislikes the liberation taken by the Press and considers them dangerous, it is wrong to interfere with the freedom of the Press. By imposing restrictions you do not change anything: you merely suppress the public manifestation of certain things, thereby causing the idea and the thought underlying them to spread further. Therefore, I would rather have a completely free Press with all the dangers involved in the syrong use of Parliament.

that freedom, than a suppressed or regulated Press.

The other strand in Nehru's thinking about the Press was anxiety about the effect of money power: "Freedom of the Press usually means non-interference by government, but there is such a thing as interference by private interests. I am unable to understand how a small group represents the freedom of the Press. The fact of a big industry by itself owning a newspaper and owning chains of newspapers cannot be said to give the Press the kind of freedom which the public should expect of it.

Jawaharlal Nehru doubtless had in mind the use made of The Times of India by Seth Ramakrishna Dalmia, a leading industrialist who controlled a bank in addition, after he acquired the newspaper in 1946. Like the British owners of several plantations and industrial units, the proprietors of Bennett & Coleman decided, on the eve of India's independence, to sell their interest and repatriate the proceeds for fear that restrictions might be imposed by the government of a free India on the remittance of foreign exchange. Ramakrishna Dalmia had definite views on how the country should be governed, and expressed, them frequently and at length through the news columns of his paper.

Speaking at the All India Newspaper Editors' Conference in New Delhi on September 17, 1952, a week before the constitution of the First Press Commission, Nehru shared with the editors his thoughts on money power over the Press: "Does the freedom of the Press 'ultimately mean freedom of the rich man to do what he likes with his money through the Press? A person with a large amount of money need not necessarily have high standards at all, though he

may have the knack of making money."

Or the knack of winning votes, one who reads those words today would add. Political power has become in relation to the broadcast media the counterpart of money power, with the difference that the Press consists of competing newspapers with a wide variety of subject matter and of political viewpoints while All India Radio and Doordarshan are mono-

polies.

Nehru's words on money power were taken as the text by the Press Commission which was formed on September 23, 1952 with Justice G.S. Rajadhyaksha as chairman. In its report two years later, the Commission spoke of the undesirable effects of ownership, such as "boosting of the proprietor", "biased reporting and editing of news" and promoting the "interests of the owner" phrases which sound ironically prophetic about the use of the publicly owned electronic media by the The Rajadhyaksha party. ruling Commission recommended the enactment of a law to fix minimum and maximum selling prices of newspapers based on the number of pages, and a coiling on advertisement space. These steps, it was argued, were necessary to enable the emergence of new publications which could not otherwise compete with the established ones. The Commission also recommended the nationalisation of the country's principal news agency, the Press Trust of India, by transferring it to a public corporation by an Act of

Parliament.

born after independence and with memories of Press censorship during the internal emergency and the manipulation of the Samachar news agency into which all the country's news agencies were forcibly merged. But the atmosphere prevailing in the early 'fifties was one of faith in public ownership, not fear of its misuse by the political party and its leaders at the time being in power. It was later that the Indian scene began to resemble closely the situation in Britain summed up by G.K. Chesterton in these words: "The mere proposal to set the politician to watch the capitalist has been disturbed by the rather disconcerting discovery that they are both the same man. We are past the point where being a capitalist is the only way of becoming a politician, and we are dangerously near the point where being a politician is much the quickest way

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The First Press Commission's proposals remained unimplemented because the Supreme Court struck down in 1961 a price-page schedule and a coiling on advertising space as violative of Press freedom since such intervention in newspaper economics could make them financially unviable. The Second Press Commission, formed by the Janata government in May 1978 with Justice P.K. Goswami as chairman, submitted its resignation — quite needlessly for a commission of inquiry — when the Morariji Desai government fell. But it was asked by the new government headed by Charan Singh to continue. When this government, too, fell and the Congress-I returned to power in January 1980, the Goswami Commission offered once again to resign. This time the offer was promptly accepted and the Commission was reconstituted with Justice K.K. Mathew as chairman. Seven out of the eleven members (including the chairman) of the reconstituted Commission endorsed the First Press Commission's recommendations; in addition, they recommended the compulsory delinking of newspapers from private commercial interests. The government was advised to form an 'autonomous body' to buy the shares of delinked newspapers which eligible members of the public, uncontaminated by business links, might not purchase. Since few individuals will regard newspapers as a safe or profitable investment, specially after they are delinked from enterpreneurs, this recommendation could lead to important sections of the Press being delinked from business only to be linked to the government and becoming like All India Radio and Doordarshan.

Finding the prospect dreadful, four dissenting members of the Mathew Commission said that if the majority's proposals were implemented, "our as Press Commission may well come to be known as

the Press Annihilation Commission". An 'action taken' report, tabled in parliament on May 14, 1984, shows that the present Government is in sympathy with is in sympathy with the majority recommendations for financial amount the majority recommendations for financial emasculation of the Press and is getting their constitutional and legal implications examined. There is thus a question mark on the future of the Indian Press. Indian Press. Emasculation through another means

was tried in the second half of Dignized by hera sthree for kdation Channal and eGangotri Remembering Sabha passed a Defamation Bill. United and forceful protest by all sections of the Press, supported by the intelligentsia, forced the government to drop the Bill. It would have been tragic if, at a time when the Soviet Union and some other oneparty systems are moving towards openness and the provision of scope for the expression of a diversity of opinion and of criticism, the Indian Press had been subjected to the draconian provisions of the Defamation Bill.

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A remarkable feature of the Second Press Commission's report is the unanimity of the eleven members in evaluating positively the post-independence role of the Indian Press. Apparently not realising that in doing so they knocked the bottom out of their case for governmental intervention in newspaper ownership and the economics of newspaper publishing, the seven-member majority joined the four dissenting members in saying: "It is to the credit of the Indian Press that, despite its predominantly urban and middle class moorings, it has evinced interest in the problems of farmers, agricultural workers, artisans, tribal groups and other sections of the rural population. Though, judged by readership or by ownership, it is not necessary for most of our newspapers to highlight the issues of poverty, the Press has made a major contribution by reminding readers of those who live below the poverty line and giving the ruling middle and upper classes a feeling of guilt.'

The Press, for its part, needs to guard against becoming so partisan in its muck-raking and opinionbuilding campaigns as to miss the distinction between news and views. Some newspapers have tended to become participants in rather than critical observers and analysts of the power game in which rival princes of the State, at the Centre or in the States, ally themselves with competing landed interests and captains of industry. The Press would do well to keep in mind the advice which Jawaharlal Nehru gave while addressing the All India Newspaper Editors' Conference at Allahabad on February 16, 1946: "A newspaper must, whatever its views might be, maintain a certain integrity about the news. It must give all the news worthy of being given, and without any distortion."

III

An Agenda for Renewal

The media of mass communication are but part of the total process of communication in a society.

Other total process of communication include Other major processes of communication include formal addition processes of communication include at formal education; political participation, specially at election election time when religion and caste are often invoked; and inter-personal communication by extension officials sion officials, party cadres and by non-party volunteers Working with local communities for social transformation malion. There is finally the process of international communication, often clogged by the barriers, physical and parties, often clogged by the barriers of control of cal and perceptional, erected by the barriers, per the hation entire hation the human family is nation-states into which the human family is

Article 45: It was stipulated in the Constitution of the Republic, which came into force in 1950, that the State should endeavour to provide within a period of ten years (i.e., by 1980) free and compulsory education for all children up to the age of fourteen.

This was a brave vision. The imagination boggles at the task of putting into free residential schools, from age five, millions of boys and girls from poor rural homes. If they are not thus physically removed from the natal environment of poverty and squalor, they will be put to work at a tender age to attend to family chores, domestic or economic, or apprenticed to a trade outside the home. The implications were not thought out by the makers of the Constitution. They would have had to consider the implications only if they made the right to education a Fundamental Right. Instead, it was put into the chapter on Directive Principles of State Policy, not enforceable by appeal to the courts. At the 1981 Census - two decades after the deadline for achieving universal schooling - the overall literacy rate in the country was 36.23 per cent, with the rates of rural literacy and of women's literacy being much lower. The prevalence of illiteracy has much to do with the stagnation of the bulk of Indian society as distinct from the upwardly mobile privileged sections. That India carries the world's largest population of the illiterate is a mockery of the vision which inspired the freedom movement.

The directive principles not being enforceable, India's ruling classes who dominate parliament have not even bothered to amend Article 45 so as to extend the original time limit of 10 years for universal schooling. If India's arrested renaissance is to move forward, citizens with a social consocience - belonging to all political parties or to none - should bring relentless pressure to bear on the governments at the Centre and in the States to remember and act on the directive principles.

A few Navodaya schools, which admit the meritorious among children who have already gone through five years of schooling, are not the answer. What is called for is a massive programme to activise and improve schools in all the villages of India, on the basis of a curriculum relevant to local rural life, with flexible working hours and academic sessions, and with incentives that will be attractive enough to encourage even poor parents to let their children attend school.

Religion: Exploitation of the vertical division of religion, by elites competing for political power, has been unwittingly encouraged by certain provisions that were incorporated with good intentions in the 1950 Constitution.

The historical background may be recalled briefly. colonialists systematically promoted separatist feelings among different sections of Indian society in order to buttress their own rule. Separate electorates were created for Muslims under the first legislation which introduced the elective principle, though on an extremely limited scale, namely the Indian Councils Act of 1909. The Government of India Act of 1919 extended separate electorates to the Sikhs in Punjab and Indian Christians in Madras

Presidency. The 1919 Act, moreover, created reserved seats for non-Brahmins in Madras Presidency and for Marathas (also non-Brahmins) in Bombay Presidency. The Government of India Act of 1935 extended the principle of reserved seats to the Depressed Classes (the so-called untouchable castes) and to women, with some constituencies reserved for Muslim women.

The 1950 Constitution of free India did away with separate electorates based on religion. But it conferred on members of minority religious communities rights not available to other citizens. Religious instruction is permitted in educational institutions run by religious minorities even if the institutions receive aid from State funds. This is in contrast to the constitutional prohibition, under Article 28 (1), of religious instruction in any educational institution

wholly maintained out of State funds.

Religious instruction is either good for all Indians or bad for all Indians. How can it be bad only for the majority of students who attend educational institutions run by the government or by local bodies, but good for those attending institutions run by the Muslim, Christian or other minorities? The absurdity and danger of this non-secular provision in the Constitution has been highlighted by recent reports of the rabidly communal and anti-Indian propaganda that is being conducted in some two hundred schools run by the Jamaat-i-Islami in

Kashmir (Patriot, October 16, 1987, p. 5). What could have led the constitution-makers to incorporate this non-secular provision? It might have been the persistence of the pre-independence habit of treating religious minorities with kid-gloves, from fear of driving the religious minorities into the waiting arms of the foreign rulers. Or it might be explained by the controversy then raging over the accession of the Muslim-majority State of Jammu & Kashmir to India. It was an issue on which almost all the Muslim countries backed Pakistan in the United Nations; India had to rely on the Soviet veto in the Security Council. Special treatment of the Muslim-minority, of India's population, it was apparently hoped, would please not only the community's predominantly non-secular leadership within the country but Muslim opinion outside

The same consideration would explain the confining to Hindus of the codification and reform of civil law to improve women's status. Successive Indian governments have refrained from interfering with the personal laws of the minorities, even though the framing of a common civil code is among the Directive Principles of State Policy. Hindu law was reformed in the 'fifties to make monogamy obligatory for the Hindu male. But the Indian Muslim male continues to be free to practise polygamy.

The special treatment of religious minorities was initially well-intentioned. It sought to assure them, specially the Muslims, that though the sub-continent had been partitioned on a religious basis at Muslim insistence, India was not a Hindu State and that the identity of the minorities would be respected. But, over the years, many political parties have come to treat the minorities as vote banks. The withdrawal

Digitized by Arya Samai Foundating Rishnaband Canage outfor the communal separatists moreover, created among Muslim leaders has been substituted by a new factor: the wooing of Muslim votes, even by political parties that profess faith in secular democracy.

A Muslim-majority district of Malappuram was carved out in Kerala, amidst fierce controversy, when the State was ruled by a Communist-led coalition. The Central Government, run by the Congress-I, sponsored a regressive Muslim Women's Act following protests by Muslim male chauvinists against a Supreme Court judgment of 1985 which held that Muslim men, like other Indians, were liable under the Criminal Procedure Code to pay maintenance to a divorced and needy wife. Another instance of acquiescence in minority communalism is the Janata party permitting one of its leading lights, Syed Shahabuddin, to head the Babri Masjid agitation.

Constitutional provisions and policy approaches which were intended to be tokens of assurance to religious minorities have thus had the effect of perpetuating the vertical division of society on the basis of religion. The challenge to statesmanship is to find ways of allowing the minorities to retain their cultural identity without making them states within a State. Communicators in the mass media and others who can mould public opinion should expose the exploitation of religion for political purposes, whether by fanatics of the majority or the minority communities, or by political parties which profess secular values but abandon them for the sake of votes.

Caste: There are some other provisions of the Constitution which call for re-examination because, though intended to remove backwardness, they have in practice served to perpetuate disunity and conflict among different castes. Articles 15 (4), 16 (4) and 335 authorise the State to make special provision for the advancement of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and of any other socially and educationally backward classes. Over the decades, the special provision has taken the form of reservations in public employment and in admissions to educational institutions including medical and engineering

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There was a time limit of ten years (subsequently increased to 40 years through successive amendments of the Constitution) in the provision for reservation of seats in parliament and the State legislatures for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. contrast, Articles 15 (4) and 16 (4) do not set a time limit for special provisions for the advancement of Though these SC, ST and Other Backward Classes. clauses permit abridgement of the fundamental rights to equality and non-discrimination, the State governments do not be ments do not have to get legislation passed for the purpose. Executive orders are issued — usually on the eve of clearly the eve of elections, as in Gujarat — setting off violent agitations h violent agitations by and against these castes whose votes are woord These executive orders have been votes are wooed. challenged in High Courts and the Supreme Court each giving different decisions at different points of time. This amount of the suprementation of the supremen time. This amounts to judicial legislation, which is fair neither to the judges nor to the citizens.

West Bengal is the only State to have provided no reservations other than for the Scheduled Castes and

Scheduled Tribes. The State Government has resistation introduced example in the British was continued to the temptation to seek votes by holding out caste- after independence without the british was continued based inducements. Kerala and Karnataka are among the few states which apply a means test in order to ensure that the special benefits of reservation go to the deserving among the Other Backward Classes and not to the well-to-do. It is unfortunate that the second Backward Classes Commission with B.P. Mandal as chairman, appointed in terms of Article 340 of the Constitution in 1979, has not recommended a means test. On the contrary, the Commission argues against a means test in the report given by it in December 1980: "It is no doubt thus that the major benefits of reservation and other welfare measures for Other Backward Classes will be cornered by the more advanced sections of the backward communities. But is not this a universal phenomenon? The chief merit of reservation is not that it will introduce egalitarianism amongst CBCs when the rest of the Indian society is seized by all sorts of inequalities. But reservation will certainly erode the hold of higher castes on the services and enable CBCs in general to have a sense of participation in running the affairs of their country.'

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Is such a caste-based approach, altogether ignoring the economic criterion, right? Should reservation of posts in the public services be confined to the stage of initial recruitment or should it apply also to posts filled by promotion? Within a Scheduled Tribe, should those living outside the tribal habitat and pursuing non-traditional occupations be treated at par with other members of the tribe? To what extent have the benefits from preferential treatment of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the issue of permits, licences, allotment of shops and houses, and numerous other concessions been cornered by others acting benami? Is the eradication poverty the basic remedy for social backwardness? Jawaharlal Nehru said while discussing the problem Harijan emancipation in the course of his presidential address at the Lucknow Congress on April 12, 1936: "For a socialist it presents no difficulty, for under socialism there can be no such differentiation or victimisation. Economically speaking, the Harijans have constituted the landless proletariat, and an economic solution removes the social barriers that custom and tradition have raised." By the same reasoning, a socialist transformation of the economy would remove the backwardness of other depressed castes and ethnic groups.

It is unfortunate that questions such as these are rarely explored in the Press, engrossed as it is in reporting the moves and counter-moves in the game of personality-based power politics. Even development according the moves and counter-moves. Even development according to the proment economists and social scientists have not probed these issues adequately. We need non-partisan, openminded studies if we are to refashion the tools of social engineering so as to achieve social harmony with justice.

Along with the exploitation of religious and caste differences for electoral gain, the electoral system itself has been a major source of discord and alienation in public life.

Amidst the turmoil of partition, it is not surprising the the that the system of single-member constituencies

after independence without critical examination. But the very first elections held in 1951-52 to the Lok Sabha and the State Assemblies on the basis of adult franchise should have opened the eyes of political parties to the inequity of this system in which the candidate who is first past the post is declared the winner and he or she takes all. A candidate who secures, say, 40 per cent of the votes cast in a multi-cornered contest becomes the sole representative of the constituency - with no voice in the legislature for the other 60 per cent of voters who did not favour this candidate. Political parties, likewise, secure huge majorities in the legislatures on the strength of less than half of the popular vote. Perhaps because different political parties have benefited at different times in various States from the present system, or hope to do so, few have questioned it. The Bharatiya Janata Party is the only one to have advocated proportional representation through a suitable variant of the List System in place of the first-past-the-post system which makes elections a lottery game.

India's Lok Sabha reflects public opinion like a distorting mirror, as does the 'mother of parliaments' in Britain. In the 1987 elections to the House of Commons the Conservatives won 57.6 per cent of the seats with only 42.2 per cent of their votes, while the Liberal-Social Democratic Alliance get only 3.3 per cent of the seats though it won 22.5 per cent of the votes. The distortion in the veto-seat ratio happened to be the least in the case of the Labour Party.

In India the performance of the winning party in the successive Lok Sabha elections in terms of the percentage of the popular vote and of the seats (given in brackets) has been as follows. 1952: Congress, 44 (74.4); 1957: Congress, 47.4 (75.1); 1962: Congress, 44.7 (73); 1967: Congress, 40.9 (54.4); 1971: Congress-I, 43.5 (67.9); 1977: Janata, 43.2 (52); 1980: Congress-I, 42.7 (66.8); and 1984: Congress-I, 49.1 (77).

The results of the election lotteries at State level have been equally analogous. As at the national level, they have tended to generate alienation and bitterness in political life, within and outside the legislative chambers. Opposition parties are tempted to adopt a loud and implacably confrontationist posture, and ruling parties to ride rough-shod over their rivals.

In Tamil Nadu, for example, in the 1984 elections to the State Assembly, the All-India Anna DMK won 133 seats with 37.1 per cent of the votes while the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) with 29.5 per cent of the votes got only 24 seats. In the latest elections in the State (January, 1989), there was a reversal of the situation. The DMK won 151 seats with 33.44 per cent of the votes while the Anna AIDMK led by Jayalalitha secured only 27 seats though it won 21.68 per cent of the votes. In Haryana, Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal the Congress-I has much fewer seats in the State Assemblies than it should have by virtue of its share of the

In Punjab, carved out in 1969 as a Punjabi speak-

acrimony in public life has been that the Akali Dal, though it commands a substantial following, has been able to have a share in governmental power only intermittently and for short periods. The controversial Anandpur Sahib resolution was adopted by the Akali Dal in 1973, after the 1971 elections to State Assembly had given the Congress-I a bonanza 63.5 per cent of seats with 42.8 per cent of the votes. The resolution was revived after the dismissal of the Akali-led government formed in 1977, following the return to power of the Congress-I at the Centre in 1980.

Instead of encouraging political parties to work together in coalition governments, as they would have had to do much of the time at the Centre and in several States if we had a system of proportional representation, the present system has encouraged confrontationist politics. It has led to demands for the premature resignation of governments before the end of their term—what is described as 'destabilisation' - by political parties which have been cheated of their due measure of representation in the legislatures. Bandhs and other forms of agitation disruptive of normal life have retarded development.

Autocratic Style: Within the ruling party, at the Centre or in a State, the electoral system invests the principal vote-getter with absolute power. The leader begins to be deified by office-seeking sycophants, and by a religiously inclined people who tend to see a revelation behind every bush and a saint behind

every saffron robe.

The leader of a party in power that is over-represented in the legislature tends to become a megalomaniac and to develop a domineering style of prime ministerial or chief ministerial government. The latter phenomenon in confined to states ruled by political parties other than the Congress-I in which. after the 1969 split, party loyalty means personal loyalty to the national-level Congress leader and charisma is not permitted to be ascribed to statelevel leaders. Congress chief ministers are usually nominated, and are removable at will, by the Prime Minister acting in the name of the party high command.

Restoring dignity to high offices: The office of State Governor, like that of the Chief Minister in Congress-ruled States, has been reduced nearly to a nullity as the result of a single party and its leader acquiring disproportionate power at the Centre. Though ordinarily confined to a ceremonial role, governors of states are, like the President of the Union, part of the delicate mechanism of checks and balances in a multi-party, federal democracy. On crucial occasions they are expected to act as impartial umpires of the power game. As things are the Governor is often a cat's-paw of the Central Government and of the political party behind it. Andhra Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir and several north-eastern states have in recent years seen governors function as hatchet-men of the leader of the party in power at the Centre.

Even the highest office of the land, that of President, was shorn of its dignity when the Union Cabinet adopted a resolution in 1987 dec-

Digitized by Arva Samai Foundation Chenagi and Community a major reason for relating to the administration of the affection relating to the administration of the affairs of the Union (expressly provided in Article 78 of the Constitution) was subordinate to Article 74 as amended during the internal emergency. It lays down that the President shall act in accordance with the advice of the Council of Ministers.

If the system of legislative representation is changed so as to ensure that no political party secures much more — or much less — representation in legislatures than is warranted by its share of the popular vote, it will become difficult for a single political party to decide who shall be President. With multi-party involvement in the choice of a suitable person as President, the appointment of non-partisan governors will become easier. No retired official - civilian or military - or member of the judiciary should be eligible for governorship until after a specified number of years from the date of retirement. Changes along these lines will help to reduce rancour in public life and to improve Centre-State relations, specially in the matter of clearance of State development projects by the Centre.

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A steady deterioration of values in public life has been the most depressing feature of the postindependence decades. It calls to mind the lines of the Irish poet W.B. Yeats who in one of his poems recalls the selfless Irish patriots of the 19th century and laments that the politicians of his own day "fumble in a greasy till and add the halfpence to the pence."

There has also been a decline of idealism among the young. Honourable exceptions excepted, the educated young today are attracted by monetarily rewarding careers in and outside India much more than by the possibility of their helping to actualise the free India of the dreams of Mahatma Gandhi

and Jawaharlal Nehru.

Can something be done to improve the climate of values? The first University Education Commission made a suggestion in its report (1949) which is worth recalling in this context. Headed by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan and with several distinguished scientists, Indian and foreign, among its members, the Commission recommended that non-sectarian and humanist religious education should be imparted during each of the three years of the degree course: "A study of great books, books that shame our smallness...is essential in the university course. reverent study of the essentials of all religions would be uniquely rewarding as a step towards harmony between religions long divided. This is in consonance with the spirit of our country... secular is not to be religiously illiterate. It is be deeply spiritual, and not narrowly religious.

After citing this recommendation, a distinguished ucationist G. Bord educationist, G. Parthasarathi, said in the course of his convocation additional and the course of his convocation and his convocation address at the University of Hyderabad in March 1987: "Now that the concept of a core national curriculum has been accepted, it seems to me that correctly the to me that consideration might be given to the inclusion in it of a inclusion in it of a course covering the development of human values the of human values the world over and with special reference to India reference to India. Such a course would cover the

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It is a Round World

MRINALINI SARABHAI

ALL my thoughts usually formulate in visual images, and the first one that came to my mind was a circle.

Suppose I take you now to live with me in space, what would our view be like if we were to see earth from there? We would see a round ball and then we would realise that there is no separateness in the entire planet. All living beings are inter-dependent. The great cities we live in are mere dots on the map and somewhere within those tiny tiny dots are we. It makes you think of how important each one is. And somewhere within that infinite spot are you and I. Let me read a poem:

"Flying down to earth,
Great mountains look like baby elephants
The seas like tiny swimming pools
The trees resemble a moss carpet
The valleys are hidden
Rivers are just pencilled lines

And great palaces, great institutions are small dew drops.

Whose was this vision? It was not Gagarin, the first modern man who saw our planet from outer space. These words, this vision, came from Bhasa who lives even before Kalidasa. So they too had

their vision from space.

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Such is the power given to us within ourselves that each individual has the key to change the entire world, yes, to change the circle around him and to make it as perfect as possible. Each individual, each one of us has the power to change the entire universe—an awe-inspiring thought indeed. Today we stand on the brink of a new world, a world torn apart by disaster. But because of these very tumultuous times the ideals of truth and non-violence are becoming more apparent to those who think. Voices perhaps are still partly unheard. They are being raised everywhere, in all corners of the earth, against tyranny the more should we cherish this planet and we have More the cour forces together.

More than communicators, I want ourselves to be integrators of humanity — that is real communication. For it is in our tradition, in our sampradaya, phasised. The Isa-vasya Upanishad begins with a God and all that lives and moves on earth". And "Do not covet another's possession". Ancient India

This contribution is taken from Mrinalini Sarabhai's address at the 1988 Convocation of New Delhi.

had seers of great wisdom who gave us the basic ideals that we called Dharma. "May the stream of my life flow into the river of righteousness", says a prayer from the Rig Veda. And all righteous action is dharma. It is left to each one of us to decide what righteous action is. The ancient stories of our tradition are guidelines of behaviour: but it is for us to understand them in their proper context.

As a dancer I learnt early the importance of tradition. No art can flourish nor can any of us without the backdrop of one's own civilisation. It is a learning process based on the experience of people who have gone before — of unending knowledge. It is an apprenticeship into the mystique of movement. But it is a continuous journey, for the search is endless. Many of us are bogged down by what we call tradition, not realising that it is a mere back-

drop, a starting point, not a full stop!

Tradition, everyone thinks, is something that happened long ago. But one need not get bogged down by tradition, because it changes all the time. While we appreciate old values, we must also search for the flaws, not in a spirit of criticism, but to reassure and transfigure them into new patterns of expression. The words that Castenda spoke to Don Juan explain this. He says: "Once you learn, every single thing in the world, you see it in a different way. Then you don't see the world in the usual way any more. I see both ways, when I want to look at it the way I know and perceive it in a different way. But what is the advantage of learning to see? Because you can tell things apart. You can see them, each one of you, for what they really are."

Today, many of us look for instant success. Very few are truly and deeply involved in the tasks themselves. Involvement to me is an essential part of living. And for that hardwork, dedication is essential. Today, we are paying the price for our non-involvement; for, we have laid waste the bounty of the earth, India's culture was the learning in the environment of forests. Our literature is filled with the beauty of the earth and the grandeur of Nature.

When I first began to study dance, working eighteen hours of the day, though the body was exhausted, the mind seemed to soar and find a strange illumination. It was as though I captured reflections of events that were part of a distant past and of the future, of times gone by and times yet to be. While I danced in the manner that I had learnt, I knew it was not enough for me. There was a flame I had to quench, and the flame was to express my own self, my dialogue with the world around me. The dance language I had learnt at the feet of my gurus spoke

MAINSTREAM May 27, 1989

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Sherwantal a decause some sage was only of Shringara. Shringara is love, beauty. But I and darkness, annoyed that she did not recognise him and darkness. looked around me and I saw both light and darkness. Dance, they say, is a reflection of life. That is what our wise men have said. But it was my need to dive deep into the ocean of existence, to listen to the beat of the world's rhythm, to unfold not only the

grandeur but the desperation of humanity.

I speak of one of my new creations or rather old creations which I call Memory. It was done in six days and was about dowry and marriage and the killing of young women. It was the first time perhaps that a technique like Bharat Natyam, so classical, so pure, has been used for a social theme of this nature. When I got married and went to Ahmedabad, I used to read Gujarati papers. It was in Saurashtra that I heard about the terrible death of women, almost every day. So it became an obsession with me and I thought "what can I do? I am not a social worker, I cannot go with a message and an appeal. Dance is my language". So I made visible the dreadful facts I learnt in this dance drama. Dance has its own vocabulary - the mudras, the hand gestures, having a role of their own and are elaborate and stylistic. When creating a dance that was to be easily understood, I make the entire body depict the meaningfulness of the theme rather than just the hands and the face as in classical dance in India. Meaning again is an intractable notion, that each individual possesses. Strange enough, this dance drama which I call Memory became a symbol in many parts of the world for the freedom of women. I receivamazingly varied reactions. Each woman seemed to see it from her angle. And it became and so it was her entire life and it introduced a new element into the circularity of this particular event. What is indeed interesting was people seldom said to me that Memory was dance about women. I wonder how many think of marriage and realise how traumatic an experience that is when a woman is taken, however lovingly, and put into another household or another society completely different from her own and what it must be to her to adjust into this life and into everything new. When I talk to women abroad, especially in America—where too it is a big problem — this aspect comes to me.

Sometimes dance becomes a universal though it may be centred upon one life. For instance, the dance drama Shakuntalam. While it began as created by Kalidasa and the story element was the same, the curse of Durvasa, who cursed this very innocent girl - kept echoing in my ears - for no reason at all except that she was in love with Dushyanta. This curse suddenly became to me almost fatalistic. Where events were pre-determined and Shakuntala powerless to alter her destiny, I thought, is there such a thing as coincidence, a chance occurrence of connecting events? So I brought together all the characters of Shakuntalam on to the stage — as Bharata says in the Natyahastra, "We are all players on the stage of life" — a thought

repeated, centuries later, by Shakespeare.

It was interesting when I did Shakuntalam. Shakuntala loses the ring and King Dushyanta does not remember. So when I came to the end of the story, I said I don't like the ending. Why should

annoyed that she did not recognise him, and so I changed the ending. In my rendering, in the end Shakuntala says when the King rejects her: right, where is the ring? If it is not on my hand, it should be on your hand because it is the King's should be on joint should not give the ring to just anybody, you should know where your ring to just anybody, you should kind: "You rejected me is". She says again to the King: "You rejected me because I did not have your ring which you should have had". She goes to her father Kanwa and she says: "You were not there when I needed you and when I fell in love with Dushyanta. Why were you not there?" She goes to her girlfriends, Anasuya and Hemalata and says to there: "Why did you not tell me to hang on to that ring?" These are questions which are normal and in the end Shakuntala says; "I came into the world alone and I go out alone I do not need any of you" and we ended Shakuntalam like that. Naturally, I have always been the centre of controversial issues like this because I asked the wrong questions.

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And from Shakuntalam, one thinks of Uma, of Savitri, of Sita and Draupadi. Each one a heartrend-

ing story.

Art is really ahead of the times. When the artist takes the worldview I spoke about in the beginning, she sees the near and the far horizons at angles not visible to the outer eye.

The creative process is a mystical one. With me, perhaps of my childhood which had overtones of national involvement, there has, therefore, always been a passionate outcry against oppression, against

the hatred of man against man.

Many years ago, I sat at the feet of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore, just two years before he died, listening to his translation of Chandalika which is about a Harijan girl. I was playing the main role and he wanted me to create the movements myself. Now, years later Chandalika has taken on, for me, more meaning: it is a fervent plea for the down trodden in our land. In other countries when I dance it, it reflects the problem of the minority community In some time of our life, even if we were not Harijans, we must have been rejected perhaps by our mothers or fathers or friends? So, in a way, we are all Harijans. We all have realised that rejection can be hurtful and, therefore, all of us have to go out into the country and to see that no one is reject ed, none of our brothers or sisters.

When we were rehearsing Chandalika in the Tagore theatre at Ahmedabad, there was a sweeper and he sat on a chair and then sat on a chair and watched us rehearing and then my daughter, Mallika, went up to him and said.
"Do you know when the said was a said when the said." "Do you know what the dance is about?" He said. "Yes, in the beginning I did not understand but it is about me Is is about me. Isn't it?" And she said "No, it is about you and me?" and me?" you and me," and he suddenly had such a smile on his face, and he said "I did not know that this dance talks about 1 did not know that this dance talks about us in such a strong way, I think that was one of that was one of the most touching moments of appreciation that

appreciation that we received from a sweeper. Art becomes a powerful weapon but the st has to understand first has to understand and be convinced of the theme, the universality theme, the universality of its measure.

literature moves me even more than music A poem ounder the literature moves me even a word can stir the imagination of the tremendous vigour of his parts. See the make my whole being respond vibrantly. So and make my whole being respond vibrantly. So very often, I have used words, stringing them into poetry so that the world understands. Perhaps the literature that stirs me the most are the Upanishads the tremendous thoughts that thunder, yes literally thunder. Their meaning is of the deepest signifigure. Just to quote, "Truth is one, wise men call it by various names".

Of the stories I like the one of Svetaketu, which all should read, of a young boy searching for truth. These are all stories but they are guide-posts showing

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Was it any wonder, that our peaceful missions in the past went to China, Korea, Japan, Burma, Thailand, Indochina, Indonesia — in fact all over South-east Asia and influenced the people there south-east Asia and influenced the people there in a cultural way? This influence is still very much part of their life. And today Vedic concepts are possessing the Western mind. The God of Dance, Nataraja is an example. When I was in Indonesia, many of the young women would ask me: "Who is your hero in India?" and I would say, well, I think, Krishna. They would say, "Oh, we like Arjuna much better because we all hope to get husbands like Arjuna." But that shows how much and how deep our culture spread, that even now the Vayankul, the Indonesian puppet group, is doing stories of Ramayanam and Mahabharatam.

All movements and moments of our living today, have these ideals as their backdrop. One may not be conscious of it but we are all dancing. It is in the way we walk, the way we talk, the use of our hands. It is not only hereditary but the psychoemotional components of our background, of our past and present life. You know a child often becomes flat-footed when he deals with the contimous challenges of life and psychologically ground himself, to face them, planting the feet firmly and flatly on the ground. Today, we are aware of reflexology, where a healthy body is reflected in the vitality of the feet. Similarly of the hands, where according to our shastra, each part is important.

Body language — that is what is called dance is a most important science for every one and I think you should have a course in it. A person can consclously restructure his mental being by this method. lt is a fascinating thought that by changing our Physical movements, we can restructure our own Selves. This has become more and more relevant. That is why dance can transform a person and open up the personality to its fullest most potent creative

Keep some part of your life for dance. Not the dance of the body, but the dance of the inner self. All of us, I mean seriously, and I talk from experience, pure I mean seriously, and I talk from experience where in silence ence, nurse a secret part of ourselves where in silence we ask over a secret part of ourselves who am !?', We ask ourselves the eternal questions: 'Who am I?', Where am I going?'. In the tumult of our everyday existence, there will be forces that will annihilate our very continuous and an image, think of Our very conscience. If we need an image, think of Nataraja. The whirling figure, the leg up, the furioushess of the tandava and yet, have you noticed, the

and the feet, all moving, and yet the face is calm and quiet. So, keep moments of our life for silence and to be within oneself because there we gather strength. It is in the silence of oneself that one will have one's greatest ideas. If we want to communicate, let us go within ourselves first because as there will be so many people to distract us and today we have enough of the media, of newspapers, of journals and we cannot keep up with reading that is around us. But the best reading is right within ourself. Each one of us can help to shape the universe. Do not waste a single moment of eternity.

FOR A VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY

Our own country is a little world in itself with an infinite variety and places for us to discover. I have travelled a great deal in this country and I have grown in years. And yet I have not seen many parts of the country we love so much and seek to serve. I wish I had more time, so that I could visit the old nooks and corners of India. I would like to go there in the company of bright young children whose minds are opening out with wonder and curiosity as they make new discoveries. I would like to go with them, not so much to the great cities of India as to the mountains and the forests and the great rivers and the old monuments, all of which tell us something of India's story. I would like them to discover for themselves that they can play about in the snow in some parts of India and also see other places where tropical forests flourish. Such a trip with children would be a voyage of discovery of the beautiful trees of our forests and hillsides and the flowers that grace the changing seasons and bring life and colour to us. We would watch the birds and try to recognise them and make friends with them. But the most exciting adventure would be to go to the forests and see the wild animals both the little ones and the big. Foolish people go with a gun and kill them and thus put an end to something that was beautiful. It is far more interesting and amusing to wander about without gun or any other weapon and to find that wild animals are not afraid and can be approached. Animals have keener instincts than man. If a man goes to them with murder in his heart, they are afraid of him and run away. But if he has any love for animals, they realise that he is a friend and do not mind him. If you are full of fear yourself then the animal is afraid, too, and might attack you in self-defence. The fearless person is seldom, if ever, attacked.

Jawaharlal Nehru

MAINSTREAM May 27, 1989

Nehru, Secularism and Nation-building

ASGHAR ALI ENGINEER

Secularism became a philosophy not only of nation-building in post-independence India but it was adopted by the Indian National Congress right from its inception and remained the anchor-sheet of its policy throughout the complex course of our freedom struggle. It was both a matter of choice as well as compulsion for the Congress leadership. It was a matter of choice in as much as the secular modern outlook of its leadership was concerned; and it was a matter of compulsion as the pluralist society of India could not have adopted any other course. Muslims, apart from others, were an important ingredient of Indian population when the Indian National Congress was founded in early seventies of the nineteenth century.

The leadership of Indian National Congress was anxious for Muslim participation in its sessions. This was not an easy task. Thus in its first session there were two Muslim delegates from Bombay and none other from any other part of the country. The Indian National Congress, therefore, had to assure that it works for the interests of all the communities which was only possible when secular or neutral posture or the posture of equal respect for

all religions was adopted.

This began to attract more Muslims so much so that the first Muslim president of Indian National Congress, Badruddin Tyabji, said in his presidential address that it was a "truly representative national gathering" and referring to the charge that Muslims were keeping aloof from the Congress, he said "... This is only partially true and applies only to one particular part of India and is moreover due to certain special local and temporary causes..." He further continued: "I do not consider that there is anything whatever in the position or the relations of the different communities of India...which should induce the leaders of any one community to stand aloof from the others in their efforts to obtain those great general reforms, those great general rights, which are for the common benefit of us all and which, I feel assured, have only to be earnestly and unanimously pressed granted to us."² upon Government to be

However, right from the beginning different trends were emerging in the Muslim politics in India. Sir Syed, a modernist and a crusader for modern education among Muslims was urging upon them (Muslims) to be loyal to the British Government and keep away from the Congress. He was in favour of honestly putting the grievances before the

The author is Director, Institute of Islamic Studies, Bombay.

rulers but this work had to be done on the basis of "loyalty" and "trust in your rulers". He wanted people to "speak out openly, honestly, and with due respect, all your grievances, hopes and fears", assuring them that "this is compatible, nay synonymous, with true loyalty to the State."

Despite opposition from loyalists, the Indian Congress was determined to attract Muslims to its fold, The orthodox Muslims led by theologians usually referred to as 'ulema were, fortunately for the Congress, quite keen to oblige it by urging upon Muslims to join the Congress and fight shoulder to shoulder with their Hindu brethren to throw out the Britishers from India. Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi, the chief spokesman of the Darul Ulum Deoband, issued a fatwa asking Muslims to associate with the Congress and against Sir Syed's stand against Muslims joining the Congress. Also, the Wahabis of India had published a book of fatwas in support of the Congress entitled Nusrat al-Ahrar, comprising over one hundred fatwas, including two from the leaders of Deoband.

Thus we see that while modernist Muslims like Sir Syed were urging Muslims to oppose the Indian National Congress, the traditionalists like the 'Ulema were egging them on to join it. Such a situation created problems of its own for adoption of secularism strictly in the modern western sense. It is necessary to be aware of such problems in order to understand the role of secularism in the nation-building processes in India. Similarly, there were traditionalists among the Hindus as well who resisted secularisation of politics. They resisted equally vehemently any progressive modern change.

Nehru himself was fully aware of these difficulties. He observes, "Among the Muslims various organisations grew up, apart from the Moslem League. One of the older and more important ones was the Jamiat-ul-Ulema which consisted of divines and old-fashioned scholars from all over India. Traditional and conservative in its general outlook, and necessarily religious, it was yet politically advanced and anti-imperialist." 5

In view of these difficulties no mechanical approach or western modernist approach to secularism could be adopted in the Indian situation. Nehru himself was western and modern in his outlook. But he, at the same time, understood the complexities of the Indian situation. Nehru himself was agnostic. He was hardly attracted by religion, except as a cultural force and heritage. He was more attracted by ethical aspects of social life and hence approves of the Chinese outlook in such matters. He says, traditional Chinese outlook, fundamentally

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He further elaborates on this theme: "But the usual religious outlook does not concern itself with this world. It seems to me to be the enemy of clear thought, for it is based not only on the acceptance without demur of certain fixed and unalterable theories and dogmas, but also on sentiment and emotion and passion. It is far removed from what I consider spirituality and things of the spirit, and it deliberately or unconsciously shuts its eyes to reality lest reality may not fit with preconceived notions."7 Nehru was definitely against organised religion. He says, quite categorically, "An organised religion invariably becomes a vested interest and thus inevitably a reactionary force opposing change and progress."8

Nehru was against organised religion and by implication also against mixing religion with politics. Politicisation of religion is not only a danger to modern secular society but to any society as such, past or present. Those who wish to use religion for their own interests try to politicise it. Who, therefore, could be more against it than Jawaharlal Nehru. And yet, we find that Nehru did not adopt superficial or mechanical approach even with respect to that. He tried to understand Mahatma Gandhi's view with full sympathy. Mahatma himself was profoundly religious and often used religious idioms

for promoting his political ideas.

Nehru quotes some of Mahatma Gandhi's writings on religion in his autobiography in order to understand him better. He quotes Gandhiji to the effect that: "No one can live without religion. There are some who in the egotism of their reason declare that they have nothing to do with religion. But that is like a man saying that he breathes, but that he has no nose." Again he says: "My devotion to truth has drawn me into the field of politics; and I can say without the slightest hesitation, and yet in all humility, that those who say that religion has nothing to do with politics do not know what religion means."9

Commenting on Mahatma's views on religion Nehru says: "Perhaps it would have been more correct if he had said that most of those people who want to exclude religion from life and politics mean by that word 'religion' something very different from what he means... It is obvious that he is using it in a sense — probably moral and ethical more than than any other — different from that of the critics of religion."10

While Nehru tries to understand Gandhiji's views on religion sympathetically, he finds himself closer to the views of Romain Rolland as both of them hold rather elitist views on religion. Nehru very approvingly quotes Romain Rolland to the effect om all souls who are or who believe they are free from all religious belief, but who in reality live immerced religious belief, but who in reality live immersed in a state of superrational consciousness, which they term Socialism, Communism, Humanitarianism It is tarianism, Nationalism and even Rationalism. It is the quality of thought and not its object which determines its source and allows us to decide whether or

and yet irreligious or tinged with religious scepticism. not it emanates from religion. If it turns fearlessly has an appeal for me, thoughtime they application to towards the search for truth at all costs with single-minded sincerity prepared for any sacrifice, I should call it religious; for it presupposes faith in an end to human effort higher than the life of existing society, and even higher than the life of humanity as a whole. Scepticism itself, when it proceeds from vigorous natures true to the core, when it is an expression of strength and not of weakness, joins in the march of the Grand Army of the religious Soul."

Then Nehru comments: "I cannot presume to fulfill the conditions laid down by Romain Rolland, but on these terms I am prepared to be a humble

camp-follower of the Grand Army."11

Of course Nehru's views on religion may not be popular neither in his time nor today. These are highly elitist views. To that extent there was a sort of dichotomy in his views and the actual ground situation. Nehru had no patience for empty rituals. Though he very well understood the complexity of the prevailing situation, he ideologically tended to reject not only organised but also ritualised religion. It often brought him into collision course with religious obscurantists in independent India too. But Nehru firmly stood his ground and did not submit to the obscurantists' ideologically though he often compromised pragmatically.

The Indian reality is too complex to be fitted into any neat ideological framework. Western model of secularism can hardly fit the Indian reality and hence Nehru's rather ambiguous attitude towards religion. There is one more aspect to be taken into account as far as Indian secularism is concerned. Its opposite category is communalism rather than religion. One can hardly talk of secularism in the Indian context without referring to communalism. The two major religious communities in India, that is, Hindus and Muslims, fought against each other mainly for wrest-

ing political and economic power.

Indian National Congress maintained, throughout the freedom struggle that it was representative of all the castes and communities and hence it has every right to represent Muslims and speak for them. Its main objective was to achieve freedom from the British rule and then establish a secular state in India wherein all, irrespective of castes and commu-

nities, shall enjoy equal rights.

However, the Muslim League maintained, especially after the 'twenties, and more particularly after the 'thirties, that it alone could represent Muslims and that it alone could speak on their behalf. The Britishers took full advantage of this on the one hand, and, such a stance by the Muslim League weakened the secular stance of the Congress on the other. Also, communalists both among Muslims as well as Hindus, looked upon the British rulers as their protectors and hence collaborated with them. Communalism, in the final analysis, is a political reaction and obstructs socio-economic change. Thus Nehru wrote to Syed Mahamud on February 2, 194212: "Essentially, I think, the attitude of Jinnah and the Muslim League is governed by the desire to prevent radical changes or the democratisation of India not tecause of a Hindu majority but because

privileges, etc. The whole conception of the Constituent Assembly is to bring out mass elements and urges which will not view the communal problem or other problems from the middle class point of view which has landed us into this impasse. Personally I see no solution of the problem so long as the third (the British) is not eleminated."

At another place he says, "Let us be clear about This communal question is essentially one of protection of vested interests, and religion has always been a useful stalking horse for this purpose. Those who have feudal privileges and vested interests fear change and become the camp followers of British

imperialism."13

However, Nehru's understanding of communalism was not that simplistic. He was aware of other factors involved. He talked of influence of communalism over the masses of people who have neither vested interests nor are they against British imperialism. He gives Hitler's example and says people are swayed by slogans which appeal to them. He even compares Indian communalists' methods with

the working of the Nazis of Germany.11

Nehru thinks and rightly so that communalism is a middle class phenomenon and he feels that so long as politics is dominated by middle class elements, one cannot do away with communalism altogether.15 Middle classes from different communities compete with each other and inject communalism in politics to wrest more and more concessions. This competition is inevitable in modern democratic polity but it can be minimised, according to Nehru when "the majority community shows generosity in the matter to allay the fear and suspicion that minorities, even though unreasonably, might have."16

Nehru also feels that the communal problem is not mainly due to economic causes. "Communal question is not fundamentally due to economic causes. It has an economic background which often influences it, but it is due much more to political causes."17 He also makes it clear that religious hostility or antagonism has very little to do with communal question. It has something to do with the communal question in that there is a slight background of religious hostility which has in the past sometimes given rise to conflict....but the present communal question is not a religious one, although sometimes it exploits religious sentiment and there

It is undoubtedly true that the communal question is fundamentally political in nature and religion is used only as an instrument for its powerful appeal. However, politics cannot be seen in isolation from the economic factor though it has its own autonomy. Political power is wielded not only for its own sake but also for redistribution of economic resources in favour of one or the other section, class or community. Nehru is not altogether oblivious of this factor. Speaking in pre-independence Indian context Nehru says, "It is to this extent economic, that the Mohammadans, the Muslims, are on the whole the poorer community as compared with the Hindus. Sometimes you find that the creditors are the Hindus and the debtors the Mohammadans;

the radical elements will put an endition of the ConstiMohammadans...It sometimes happens that a conflict is really between money-lender and his debtor or between a landlord and his tenants, but it is reported in the Press and it assumes importance as a communal conflict between Hindus and Mohammadans. Fundamentally this communal problem is a problem of the conflict between the members of the upper middle-class Hindus and Muslims for jobs and power under the new Constitution."19

In fact before independence India was a nation in the making and it faced a number of dilemmas. As a pluralist country it had no option but to adopt secularism as its political policy and make constant efforts to strengthen secularism and secular forces. But pluralism and uneven development of various religious communities and segments of population seriously interfered with the process of secular nation-building. Muslims, as a weaker community demanded their share in power and jobs and other economic resources and thus generated communal conflict. The majority communalism was no less offensive and in turn strengthened minority communalism. It was this dilemma of secularism-communalism in the process of nation-building which was never satisfactorily resolved and ultimately the country was divided. Of course dilemma was not resolved even after partition. The communal and ethnic problems confront very seriously both the countries even today (the two countries have become three after violent cession of Bangladesh from Pakistan). However, it is a different story.

Nehru was somewhat soft towards Muslim communalism, not because he approved of minority communalism. He was unsparing to both minority and majority communalism. He was somewhat soft towards Muslims as they were backward and more disadvantaged and also because he wanted to allay their fears so that they could be reassured and retained within the Indian union. He was very positive that the Indians can get together only if the outside power would leave them alone.20

He felt India's strength lay in remaining secular, fighting vested interests who parade themselves as protectors of Hindus or Muslims. He was also certain that the Muslims by and large would readily opt for secularism provided their fears were allayed and they were given constitutional protection in religious,

cultural, linguistic and every other way.21

However, Nehru's optimism was not borne out by subsequent events. The country got divided for which not only the Muslim League and Jinnah but others were also responsible though the greater share of responsibility has to be borne by the League and its ideologue Jinnah. How far Nehru was responsible is a matter of serious debate among the historians in India 22 This apport India.²² This question can never be satisfactorily resolved.

Whatever the merit of the controversy about Nehru's role in partition two things are certain. Firstly, Nehrus had never ideologically accepted the concept of two-nation, much less the partition. Secondly, Nehru, after partition, was determined to build a secular India whatever the odds and difficulties. Nehru was a great votary of secularism. His own

notion of secularism was underubted by we sere in Foundation was well aware of Indian complexities and wanted to apply it creatively keeping Indian conditions in view.

According to Nehru a secular state does not, of course, mean that people should give up their religion. A secular State means a State in which the State protects all religions, but does not favour one at the expense of others and does not itself adopt any religion as State religion.23 It was precisely in this spirit that under Nehru's guidance constitutional guarantees were given to all religions,

specially to minority religions.24

Nehru was also determined to eliminate communalism from independent India. He therefore, caused a resolution to be moved in the Parliament by Ananthasayanam Ayyangar. 25 It is worth quoting the resolution in full as it reflects the philosophy of independent India as propounded by "Whereas it is essential for the proper functioning of democracy and the growth of national unity and solidarity that communalism should be eliminated from Indian life, this Assembly is of opinion that no communal organisation which by its constitution or by the exercise of the discretionary power vested in any of its officers or organs, admits to exclude from its membership persons on grounds of religion, race and caste, or any of them, should be permitted to engage in any activities other than those essential for the bona fide religious, cultural, social and educational needs of the community and that all steps, legislative and administrative, necessary to prevent such activities should be taken."

Nehru also felt that communalism is much more dangerous than an external attack. One could fight with all determination an external attack. "But the other (communal) attack is vicious, because it gradually creeps into our minds without our understanding its full significance or its full danger."26 Nehru's vigorous attacks on communalism and communal organisations won him sympathies of minorities in independent India. But it also created problems for him. A section of majority community became highly critical of him for his accommodation of, and soft corner for, minorities in general, and Muslims

in particular.

The Hindu communal organisations like the Hindu Mahasabha, the Jan Sangha and the RSS demanded ban on cow slaughter. When he went to Ranchi a pamphlet was distributed by the Mahasabha towards the end of November, 1952. Nehru reacted sharply to this pamphlet and said that people should not be misguided by mischievous propaganda which had political designs. Those who shouted slogans for cow he said state of the said state cow, he said, wanted to rouse religious feelings of the people to serve their own purpose.27

Then Nehru goes on to make a very interesting observation which shows his empirical understanding of the proof t of the problem. He observes: "Our constitution lays down that the problem of the problem of the problem of the problem. down that we are a secular state, but it must be admitted to we are a secular state, but it must be admitted that this is not wholly reflected in our mass living and that this is not wholly reflected in our mass living and thinking. In a country like England, the state is state is, under the constitution, allied to one particular reliable to the constitution, allied which is a cular religion, the Church of England, which is a sect of Christianity. Nevertheless, the state and the people the secular way. people there largely function in a secular way.

Chennal and eGangotri Society, therefore, in England is more advanced in this respect than in India, even though our constitution may be, in this matter, more advanced."28

Nehru's above words about secularism proved to be prophetic. Despite a very secular kind of constitution, Indian society is still far from being secular. India is facing today, more than 40 years after independence, far greater communal menace than immediately after independence. What matters is empirical reality, not merely an ideal. Nehru, it must be admitted, chose secularism not as a matter of compulsion but on grounds of ideal and ideology. But an ideal or an ideology may indicate an intention or a direction, not the actual process and ground reality. Ground reality, it must be noted, and as pointed out by Nehru himself, is determined by the actual and concrete socio-religious conditions.

Nehru had laid great emphasis on science and technology and had thought with its dissemination rational and secular forces will get strengthened. He even considered dams like Bhakra Nangal as a modern temple, mosque or a university.29 However, the process of nation-building is far more complex. The process of development releases very complex and contradictory forces. While it undoubtedly spreads science and technology in one section, it strengthens forces of orthodoxy and fundamentalism in another section. Those who benefit from science and technology welcome it and talk of more technology and accompanying rationality. Those who stand to loose, or gain nothing out of it, do not develop any enthusiasm for it. Not only this, they may develop an hostile attitude towards it may be won over by those who gain by reinforcing conservatism and orthodoxy. Thus fundamentalism raises its head.

Nehru upheld secularism as an ideal and consciously worked for its dissemination in the society. However, Nehru had seen, in the last phase of his life, a series of major communal riots which took place from 1961 to 1964 in the north and northeastern towns. He was greatly shaken after the Jabalpur (a town in MP) riot in 196230. He formed the National Integration Council thereafter. Even immediately before the Jabalpur riots the communal situation in the country was bad enough. Nehru had to issue an appeal for emotional integration on

July 5, 1961.31

Nehru undoubtedly stood, and stood firmly, for secularism, enlightenment and tolerance. He expected majority to be magnanimous towards minority. He wanted to allay the fears of minorities and took a sympathetic view of minority communalism saying that "Honest communalism is fear; false communalism is political reaction."32 He also laid down the test of success of secularism as what minority feels and not what the majority thinks.

However, the events did not go Nehru's way in his life time as well as after his death. Nehru was a visionary and he had chosen secularism for India not merely out of compulsion but as a progressive and scientific viewpoint. It was more of a vision than a compulsion as far as Nehru was concerned.

(Continued on page 65)



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Media and Women

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MIRROR IMAGE — THE MEDIA AND THE WOMEN'S QUESTION by Vimal Balasubrahmanyam (Published by Centre for Education and Documentation, 1988, pp 157+viii, Hardbound Rs. 175 and Paperback Rs. 75).

The debate on women's question and the media is no longer limited to all-women groups, or women's journals. To talk and write about women's issues is now respectable activity, not mere eccentricism. However, biases die hard. The writer states at the very outset that one can take the fact of the media being sexist as proven; and therefore, this book shall make an effort at tracing certain new dimensions that have emerged in the Indian media due to its interaction with the women's movement in general, and Women's Decade in particular.

The first chapter, Light & Shade: Reflections from Media Sociology gives us a collage of insights from findings in media sociology. This creates the basis for examining the media's treatment of the women's question in subsequent chapters. A look at the references and notes that follow this chapter reveals that all the sources of the sociological insights quoted herein are non-Indian. This basic assumption that women's issues in India, and the Indian media's treatment of these, are but a part of what is a totally global phenomena, is further confirmed, when the foreword goes on to say that the study concentrates mainly on the English language printmedia, "with a brief look at television", and "just a glance at cinema and at advertising".

In as much as the medium is the message, language becomes not only a tool of communication, but an essential part of the message itself. In a country like India less than two per cent are literates and one per cent of our women know English. The rest Subsist wholly on a diet of the vernacular media. Omitting the vernacular media altogether from the purvious the vernacular media altogether from the purview of any study of the Indian media, therefore, threatens to increase the invisibility of the average woman and her area-specific actions and reactions further and her area-specific actions are receptions further, and renders the average woman's perceptions about the average woman's perceptions. about the media and her portrayal in it unnecessary, if not antiif not entirely meaningless. Even in the West (from where markets have been where most of the media sociology quotes have been taken) taken), even among the most ardent supporters of global formation and the most ardent supporters of the unia global feminism, a clear awareness of the uniqueness of the individual and importance of a diversity of visions exists and reconfirms the need to communicate in a common language as far as possible:

"... finding language that will allow people to act together, while cherishing each other's individuality, is probably the most feminist and therefore, truly revolutionary function of writers..."

Gloria Steonem (Introduction to Outrageous Acts and Every day Rebellions)

This is not the right context for an in-depth review of the relationship between language, power and social structure in India, but it is essential to point out that when we talk about the media, we are not talking about a free-floating reality, or even a relatively autonomous one. In an ex-colonial country like India, the socio-economic systems, in which the English language currently lives and loves and has her being, generate awesome biases and pressures (both psychological and monetary) on the ultimate production and dissemination of ideas. The existence of the vernacular media because of, or, inspite of these, and the resultant trends therein usually go uncommented. It would have been rewarding, had Balasubrahmanyam, while she was presenting an incisive picture of the one and only non-commercial feminist magazine Manushi, also researched how Manushi had also launched a Hindi version simultaneously, which curiously had to be folded up after a few years, for lack of readers' response. Curiously, because today the Hindi readership covers some 45 per cent of the total readership in India. It also belongs mostly to a class where women's alternatives are more restricted, where rebellion may often be less rhetorical, but more real and threedimensional, and where most working women's salaries are all that stand between utter degrading poverty and self-respect. Why was this segment. which should have been a natural taker for an excellent, informative and no-nonsense periodical like Manushi, not receptive to it? Could it be, that the marketing forces realising its tremendous potential, choked it off? Or was it that the editors themselves could not bring the same crusading zeal in promoting it in the market, that they have shown in promoting the English version? Or could it have been due to a deep malaise in the soul of the middle class vernacular reading woman, which makes her flinch from an honest and provocative journal and turn to periodicals that give her nothing but soft pornography, recipes and knitting patterns? Questions such as these automatically swim into the mind, but the book is silent on this.

The second chapter, Virtual Image-Visibility

The author is editor of Saptahik Hindustan

the entire vernacular scene in a brief paragraph on regional language media, closing only with - "all these are areas which need to be researched." A pity, since these are the very areas which must be researched before any coherent picture of the Indian media

can be put together.

Chapter IV, Face to Face Interaction Between the Media and the Movement, again brings us face to face with another somewhat unresolved conflict within the feminist movement in India. One must compliment the writer for her honesty and objectivity in presenting this. Consciously or otherwise, most activists early in their activist careers, get divided into reformist or liberal: those that resolve to quit the mainstream and fight the system through alternate media from the outside, and those who resolve to stay within and counter sexism with socialist reformist gestures, through the mainstream media. What this chapter leaves out is the fact that interestingly, in most cases (in print media atleast), both groups opt for English as the language of communication. This severely limits the nature of their conflicts and cooperation, as also the access to the average woman, especially in small towns and the rural areas. Most feminist journals and papers, inspite of their good intentions end up preaching to the converted, and making occasionally wild assumptions about what the 'other half' (or shall we say three quarters? feels on certain issues, without establish-

NEHRU ON WOMEN

I have long been of opinion that a nation's progress depends on the position of women there. The fall of India from her high status was partly at least done due to the deterioration of the status and position of women in India. In a subject country men and women both suffer the indignity of subjection to foreign rule and the numerous disabilities that flow from it. So the first and primary duty of every one is to do his or her utmost to free the country. Indeed it is in performance of the duty that a person or a group gets rid also in some measure of other disabilities. We have seen during the past quarter of a century how the participation of women in the great national struggle in India has in effect raised their status in many ways and opened out opportunities to them.

Now we are on the verge of great changes but before these take place great efforts and sacrifices will be needed. In these I hope women will take a leading part and thus fit themselves for the responsibilities ahead. They will have the future task of getting rid of the many disabilities, legal, social and other, which today attach to their sex, so that they may play an equal part with their menfolk in the

building up of a free India.

(Message to UP Conference of the All India Women's Conference October 29, 1945)

of the Women's Question in the Media, dismisses linguage of the SEWA, from Guiarati processed by the SEWA, from Guiarati processed by the SEWA. recorded by the SEWA, from Gujarati press, needs to be examined closely as it may have its roots as much in its biases as in the lack of a sympathetic link most activist groups generally fail to establish with the vernacular press. If the vernacular press is sexist and casteist and communal, the need to forge these links becomes even more urgent, since feminism started as a protest against segregation of all kinds.

In real life, for a woman of small means, facing acute distress in all its multi-dimensionality, radical or liberal are ultimately just one-dimensional labels worn by those that can afford it. They, therefore, generate hardly any excitement or hope or warmth in her. The term 'using the media' that springs up in the chapter again and again, thus becomes heavy with sedimented memories of women as Kamala. being used' by both. So what is the difference one may justifiably ask, if some feminists curse the media, while harbouring secret designs on how to use it? One feels, to the extent that women can dictate the terms of any debate in the media, feminists and their real supporters within the media made a major mistake in allowing the women-baiters within the media to tempt serious feminists into 'using' their equal-space formula, that is, give a paragraph to a feminist, followed by a paragraph by a feminist baiter like Khushwant Singh, Puri Shankaracharya or Shahabuddin. This way a good copy is generated for files, excitement builds, yet status-quo remains. We may recall, this has also been the standard puisillanimous practice in much of the media, when reporting communal trouble. (Column to Bhindranwale, box to the governor, box to Imam Bukhari, another box to Shankaracharya, etc.) This way the writer escapes being branded as communal by one side or another, the editor escapes the wrath of his mentors who are frequently communal, but most readers are left with their original biases and confusions intact. Recently Manushi and several other media men and women have begun rejecting this practice, and assuming responsibility for doing their own investigations, and have come out with incisive and analytical reports on communalism, dowry, amneocentesis and bride-murders. The findings and analysis of such reports often contradict our standard and tacit assumptions about the above. The series of recent articles by Madhu Kishwar on dowry, are a case in point, which have generated a lot of debate both among feminists and the serious media people, and led to a lot of soul-searching.

Unfortunately, this has yet to be done in the area of the Uniform Civil Code. At the time of the Bano controversy, and later the Deorala sati, most of us ended up arguing defensively with the statusquoists that if the demand was going to lead to communal conflagrations, we were not for pushing it, whereas the real ground is, and should have been, to push for the food push for the freedom of choice, while at the same time proving conclusion time proving conclusively how a democratic and free choice was denied choice was denied women, under the personal laws and the prevailing family structure.

Chapter V, The Audience Strikes Back and VI The Great Spin.-off in a way, spring from the heart of the book's in a way, spring from the majority of the book's ironical omission of the majority

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media, when they graphically of most by instances Foundation Phathetsands Canophice of success, variously in the media, hostile reactions to feminist writing and media's misuse of it. Although in a cultural milieu which is basically male-supremacist, all polarisation is interpreted as deadly combat of a me-winyou-lose kind; internal distinction and criticism can often be constructive, and varied orchestrated tactics and styles can be assets too. However, when women talk about women and the media, the question of basic ideas and conditions of their work-place within the media and in the society, must never be divorced from those of theory — call it ideology if you will. For it is this that ultimately shapes the true role and purpose of both the movement and the media. The job market in the commercial media today demands a gradual, but steady de-ideologisation of

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name of media-aesthetics or specialisation (I-shallwrite-only-in-and about the English-media-becausethat-is-what-I read) or a strange kind of monetary Darwinism, (Those-that-can-afford-to-buy-the-periodicals-are-the-ones-whose-language-stories shall-be-written in). This must not be left unattacked or undebated either in feminist seminars or in any serious analysis of the vital questions of Indian women's visibility, employment and equality within the media. If we do not do so, we shall forever get deflected into discussions that will at best be theoretical and jargon-loaded, at worst pompous and dead. And however sharp our perceptions and research, both shall remain largely incomprehensible to the very women we are worrying about.



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Nehru's Tribal Philosophy and Tribal India Today

BHUPINDER SINGH

In the initial stages of his "Discovery of India", Jawaharlal Nehru did not have many occasions to come in contact with the tribal people living in remote, inaccessible areas. But once he located them, he detected in them a people after his heart and spoke of them in eloquent terms. Perhaps, no other single community evoked so much of empathy, poetry and warmth in him as did the tribal people. He evolved a philosophy and policy for development and growth of the tribal people, culminating in the early ififties in the now well-known Panchsheel of tribal development.

It is characteristic of Nehru that he should have conceived of the first principle of Panchsheel calling for development of people along the lines of their own genius. The tribal communities in the country exhibit wide-ranging traits not only in contradistinction to the non-tribal society around but also amongst themselves. The socio-cultural contrast among two neighbouring tribal communities may often be marked by a magnitude not less than that differentiating one tribal community from neigh-

bouring non-tribal society.

I was struck by this fact when I studied the Saora tribe in detail; the Soara and Kond, the two neighbours could not even communicate with each other through the medium of a common language. The diversity is apparent in not only socio-cultural field, (mythology, belief system, religious system, art expression, etc.) but in other spheres also. The Santhals have had a multi-tiered organisational structure, while some other tribes have managed with dual village-level and apex tiers; some smaller communities have been content with village selfgovernment only. On the economic front, selfsufficiency prevails, though small external trade and commerce have been necessary for some commodities like salt, edible oil, kerosene, cloth etc. On the whole, there is reason to believe that secluded and isolated existence has led to autonomous evolution of a tribal community possessing unique traits. This is presumably what Nehru refers to as 'genius'.

In recent times, there has been a welcome return of attention to planning decentralisation, implying assonance between grassroot requirements and planning contents. Decentralisation is expected to enable the tribal to give expression to his needs and the development machinery to respond. It was the imperative of this consonance that Nehru

Dr. Singh was formerly Special Commissioner of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, Government of India.

stressed in the Panchsheel.

The convention of the grassroot tribal leaders (panchayat, panchayat samitis, zilla parishad level) held in March 1989 under the auspices of the National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes was an important step in this context. In the first instance, it demonstrated that the grassroot tribal leaders are no longer a mute. inarticulate lot. At the convention, they were forthright in demanding reservations in panchayat. block and district tiers both inside and outside tribal areas as well as a recognition of their traditional representative organisational structures. They also called for amendment of the Forest Conservation Act 1980 so that it does not impede development work. Were Nehru to be alive today, their performance would have gladdened his heart.

In a speech at the conference of Tribes and Scheduled Areas held on June 7, 1952 Nehru

said:

There are generally two ways of approaching the problem of the tribal people. One might be called the anthropological approach of treating these people as museum specimens to be observed and written about and not as living human beings with whom one could work and play. The other approach is of rather ignoring that they are something special and different and trying to absorb them into normal pattern of society elsewhere. Both these approaches are wrong... We must give them a measure of protection in their contents and outsider measure of protection in their areas so that no outsider can interfere with them except with their consent and

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In retrospect, it appears that this policy of protection has paid off. Reservations in legislatures have enabled tribal view-point to be heard at the national and state levels, and reservations in services have generated a confidence among them that could not have been there earlier. The special socioeconomic plans and programmes of development, to whatever extent they have been beneficial, have also contributed. There has been a measure of progress in the education in the educational field. The net result of all these political and socio-economic processes — many originating in Nehru's time — has been a new sense of tribal participations. tribal participation in national life and institutions.

It has meent It has meant some advance but the Scheduled Tribes have still a long way to go. Beneath a veneer of leadership lies a way to go. leadership lies a vast backward and unlettered mass of people. The of people. The remote Kond, Bhil, Gond, Ho, Munda are better. Munda are better known examples of a whole populace waiting lace waiting to be helped out of the morass of poverty, disease poverty, disease and illiteracy. For quite some time to come the time to come, they need protection from external predatory agencies. By predatory agencies. But the protection must be genuine and effective the protection must be genuine and effective. The well-intentioned enactments of legislatures should be translated adequately in the field.

the tribal rights in land and forest should be respected. In retrospect, it seems that in Nehru's days the problems of land and forest would not have been characterised by the acuity that we witness today. Nevertheless, awareness of slippage of tribal land, particularly among the enlightened national leadership, was not dim either. Even at that stage, the magnitude of the land problem seems to have thrust it on the attention of the leadership. But the problem of forests had not assumed such serious proportions to warrant its inclusion in the Panchsheel along with land. In anticipating it, Jawaharlal Nehru gave evidence of his prescience and perception. In calling for discipline in recognition and preservation of tribal rights over the two basic natural resources of land and forest, Nehru touched deep on the

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The charge that tribals are responsible for wholesale destruction of forest seems misconceived. Forest is a tribal life-line as it provides them food, employment and abode; they derive from it fuel, fodder. timber and scores of items of minor forest produce. Tribals have to rely on forest for fuel and timber for domestic purpose, and even sometimes for livelihood, but this is in common with many other rural communities. It has to be recognised, however, that tribals have a vested interest in forest preservation and promotion. Contrarily, the legitimate and illegitimate run on forest by the commercial interests for voracious consumption of industry, railways and defence has been callous and enormous. Further, the location of some development projects has been preceded by extensive denudation of forests. The depletion rate has far outstripped the pace of afforestation, directly affecting tribals and ecology. An indirect effect of forest erosion has been degradation of tribal land and close environs. In the tribal context, the basic issue is food and hygienic drinking water for the tribal people. The plans should provide for the two fundamental necessities. Planned development process is likely to usher in change. But the nature and quality of change should be left to be decided by the tribal community itself. The crux of the matter is that the tribal has to be the arbiter of his own destiny. He should be the person to be asked what type of change and development he desires. The answer may be different from different communities. Each community has to evolve its line of growth.

Jawaharlal Nehru was of the view that in this country, not only should tribal languages be allowed to continue but they should be encouraged to flourish trish rish. He was convinced that tribal contributions Would enrich India's cultural mosaic. There has been some progress in development of tribal languages ages and their linkage with the educational curricula. With clear policy and directions, the progress educations. The content and the pattern of education relevant for different Scheduled Tribe communities have to be carefully evolved with particular reference reference to their socio-cultural milieu.

It is amazing that Nehru was able to comprehend so much about tribals, their life and culture, with so

in the second Panchsheel, Nehru exhorted that busy life of multiferious activities of second and forcest also like the busy life of multiferious activities of second and forcest also like the busy life of multiferious activities and forcest also like the busy life of multiferious activities and forcest also like the busy life of multiferious activities and forcest also like the busy life of multiferious activities and forcest also like the busy life of multiferious activities and forcest also like the busy life of multiferious activities and forcest also like the busy life of multiferious activities and forcest also like the busy life of multiferious activities and the busy life of multi struggle and subsequently as Prime Minister of a newly independent, emerging India. Part of the reason may have been his ardent spirit and part his keen mind. He was a committed humanist as well as a rationalist radical. He touched the tribal psyche when he called for their advancement along with the preservation of their identity.

Today, it is necessary to examine whether under the broad canopy of the Panchsheel, the existing policy formulations and instruments are adequate. For example, the legislation in regard to alienation of tribal land needs a fresh look. The policy in regard to establishment of big projects encroaching upon tribal land and causing tribal displacement needs to be appraised afresh. Induction of big administrative machinery in tribal areas should be subjected to close examination to prevent its oppressiveness. Ways and means of telescoping harmoniously some indigenous precarious low-cost economies with the inflationary high-cost macro-economies have to be found.

Finally, let us not lose sight of the fact that tribals have maintained the ecological balance through ages. Their use of natural resources did not outstrip resource regenerative capacity. Almost every Scheduled Tribe community devised its own ethno-technology, in fact a whole ethno-system. Left to the nselves, they might have been able to develop them further. But they have now to contend with the inexorable march of modernisation. The forces of technology and economics have been closing in on tribal areas, transforming the character of the tribal communities. Some tribal elite groups favour modern education and technology for extricating the mass from backwardness and illiteracy. With accelerating tempo of modernisation, the distinctive tribal character, of which Nehru was enamoured, is likely to be obliterated, blurring the distiction between the tribals and the non-tribals. But there is a contrary pull. Vocal tribal groups have sprung up in support of preservation of tribal identity and culture. Tribal resurgence is world-wide. In our country, it has taken a marked turn. Thus, we are back to the controversy about the feasibility of tribal advancement without the sacrifice of their culture and identity. The question may have been of academic interest earlier. Today, it bristles with practical significance. One may venture to hazard the view that while it may be possible to preserve and even develop tribal forms of art and culture, tribal life styles and ethos may not remain immune to the powerful exogenous influences. However, this is an area which calls for application of fine and sensitive minds. A modus vivendi has to be evolved.

I have always - long before I became Prime Minsiter, felt very strongly attracted to the tribal people of this country. This feeling was not the curiosity an idle observer has for strange customs; nor was it the attraction of the charitably disposed who want to do good to other people. I was attracted to them simply because I felt happy and at home with them.

-Jawaharlal Nehru

Nehru on Law and Social Change

RIYAZ PUNJABI

AWAHARLAL NEHRU, according to Norman Cousins, "was not one man but a procession of men.1 In fact, Nehru had a multi-dimensional personality. He was politically a national hero, a high ranking statesman, philosopher, historian, author, educationist, planner and above all a romantic. Hence as Norman Cousins puts it "in total, a triumphant assortment of paradoxes."2 It may, however, be mentioned here that many a scholar opine that it is a myth to call Nehru a dreamer or an idealist. They describe Nehru as a shrewd politician and a tactician.3

Nehru encompassed varied parameters of life and dwelt on many subjects and analysed many an institution. His impact on India has been profound. In the words of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan: 'His life and work have had a profound influence on our mental make up, social structure and intellectual development".

Nehru emerged on the social scene of Allahabad as a practising lawyer. He, after having qualified as a Barrister-at-Law from the Inner of London, returned to India to inherit the lucrative practice of his father, Moti Lal Nehru, at the Allahabad High Court. He practised for eight years at the Bar. However, the passion to free the country from foreign rule overtook his routine of legal profession, and Nehru bade a good-bye to his career as a lawyer, the activity which he considered 'dull' owing to his own temperament, personality and idealism. Amusingly, he would sometime dwell in his past, and in his own words: There was little that was inviting in that legal past of mine, and at no time have I felt the urge to revert to it. I suppose I would have done tolerably well at the Bar, and I would have had a much more peaceful, a duller, and physically a more comfortable existence than I have so far had. Perhaps I might even have developed into a highly respectable and solemn-looking judge with wig and gown as quite a number of my old friends and colleagues have done."5

Nehru was essentially a democrat. And needless to mention here that law is the basic instrument of socio-economic change in a democracy. However, in order to comprehend the role which Nehru wanted the law to play, one has to comprehend the society which he wanted to build in the postindependent India. In order to comprehend that,

Dr. Punjabi is Professor in Distance Education in the University of Kashmir. This paper was presented by him in the All India Seminar on "Nehru — Law and Social Change", organised by the Faculty of Law, Aligarh Muslim University (February 25-27, 1989).

one has to persue the maze of his writings, speeches and letters. A disjointed study of Nehru would lead to misleading and erroneous conclusions.

Nehru wrote, while elaborating the objective of Congress Party in 1938: "The idea of the Congress is the establishment of a free and democratic society in India. Such a democracy involves an egalitarian society in which equal opportunities are provided for every member for self-expression and selffulfilment and an adequate minimum civilised standard of life is shared by each member so as to make the attainment of this equal opportunity a reality. This should be the background or the foundation of our plan". This sums up the sociopolitical philosophy of Nehru and the society which

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he wanted to build in independent India.

Nehru believed in individual liberty and freedom, and he believed in evoking the inner human qualities of human beings so that they would ultimately indulge in self-discipline. This approach to deal with human and social problems, no doubt, is too philosophical, but this is the solution which Nehru thought would build a society free of social tensions. M. C. Chagla describes Nehru as a humanist and according to him: "A humanist is essentially a democrat not for any ideological reasons but because democracy essentially gives to the individual his self-respect and realisation of his value as a separate personality and makes him feel that he is an equal with the highest in the land". Nehru believed in adopting a human approach to deal with individual and collective problems. "The moment we forget the human approach, somehow the foundation of

our thinking is removed".8

Nehru guided the country in adopting the path of parliamentary democracy because he thought that it was through this form of government that he would realise the dream of building a society where individual freedom, social and economic equalities and justice would go hand in hand. According to him: "The system of parliamentary democracy embodied principles of change and continuity Nehru, on account of his intellectual and mental emancipation, did not believe in the repressive measures of the governments to impose discipline on the individuals. According to him: "We believe in democracy Specification of the initial first democracy. Speaking for myself, I believe in it; first of all, because it removes the pressures which other forms of government may impose on the individual. It transforms the discipline which is imposed by to self-discipline." But then authority largely the individual does not live in isolation. An individual is a social to the individual does not live in isolation. An individual is a social to the individual does not live in isolation. dual is a social being. And how did Nehru view individual in relation to the society? Did he consider individual sider individual interest paramount to the social interest or vice verses paramount to the social interest or vice verses as a social way to the social interest or vice verses as a social vice verse verses as a social vice verse verse verses as a social vice verse interest or vice-versa? In his own words: "We talk of the good of society. Is this in the good of the individual composand transcending the good of the individual composing it?" Nehru believed that "real social progress will come when opportunity is given to the individual to develop, provided the individual is not a selected group but combines the whole community". To sum up, Nehru had the faith on the indivi-

dual who would rise to the occasion to be a harbinger of common good.

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AS a liberal democrat, Nehru believed in the Rule of Law, and according to him unless a community lived under the Rule of Law it would tend to be lawless. In the words of Nehru: "As I said, law seems to be the basis of civilised existence. Without law society would go to pieces". 10 However, what concerned Nehru most was that laws should not be static and these should adapt to the changing needs of the society. This theme concurrently runs into his many speeches and writings. Writing in the World of History, in 1934, Nehru wrote: "Laws are meant to fit existing conditions and they are meant to help us to better ourselves. If conditions change, how can the old laws fit in? They must change with changing conditions, or else they become iron chains keeping us back while the world marches on. No law can be an unchangeable law".11

Nehru was the first social and political activist in post-independent India who wanted to have a social mind while dealing with laws. And he argued in the same fashion. He cited the instance that in case distinguished lawyers and jurists of Plato's days, who were able men had met together, they would have taken haman slavery for granted. According to him, it was an expected thing not only then but till much later and nobody challenged it. However, later it was not only condemned but uprooted practically all over the world. According to Nehru, "the social mind would not accept slavery as such". Nehru believed that "if the law did not adapt itself quickly with the industrial and technological advances, a gap would occur between the functioning of the law as it functioned previously and new developments in society which would lead to social strife and friction. 12 In the words of Nehru "...And the changes take place at a terrific pace in this jet and space travel age. The rule of law must run close to the rule of life. It cannot go off at a tangent from life's prolems and be an answer to the problems which existed yesterday. Problems, 18 Nehru not only wanted the laws adapt to changing social needs but he believed that laws should be instruments of social It is on this behalf that he did not want the bedrock of our social, legal and political rights that is, Constitution of India, to be a static and a monolithic document. Speaking on Article 368 in the Constitution of India, to be a state that the constitution of India, to be a state that the constitution of India, to be a state that the constitution of India, to be a state that the constitution of India, to be a state that the constitution of India, to be a state that the constitution of India, to be a state that the constitution of India, to be a state that the constitution of India, to be a state that the constitution of India, to be a state that the constitution of India, to be a state that the constitution of India, to be a state that the constitution of India, to be a state that the constitution of India, the constitution of Ind Constituent Assembly, Nehru said: "while we want this Constitution to be solid and permanent as we can make it the constitution." we can make it, there is no permanence in constitutions. There is no permanence in contract the should be a certain flexibility. If you make appeal should be a certain flexibility to stop make anything rigid and permanent, you stop nation's growth, of living vital organic people. In any event, we could not make this Constitution so

ditions". Nehru firmly believed that there should be no impediments in changing the Constitution and he held that "when we make a constitution, which is solid and as basic as we can, it should also be flexible and for a period, we should be in a position to change it with a relative facility"

Nehru, and it is very interesting to note, tried to dispel the much believed notion that the advent of British in India was responsible in bringing the reformative legislation to change the social conditions in India. Nehru felt that the British Government did not genuinely bring reform in 'Hindu Law' to change the Hindu society. According to him, earlier the customs would bring a change in the existing laws to suit the changing conditions of the society. However, "The coming of the British, as I said, made the whole conception static, because they codified our law and did so with the help of the most conservative sections of the community they could find...The British were not interested in our law this way or that way. They were only anxious to have some kind of peace in such matters so that they could carry on their exploitation or whatever you may call it. So the coming of the British suppressed the dynamic element in Hindu society.14

The real challenge to Nehru came when he introduced Special Marriages Bill in 1954, and Hindu Marriages Bill first in 195i and later in 1955. It was not an easy task to convince the vast and divergent opinions in the country on this behalf. The bargain was politically less favourable. However, Nehru with his quality of statesmanship, and a leader, rose to the occasion to establish the norm that law should be utilised as an instrument to bring

about the required social change.

While speaking on Divorce Clause of Special Marriages Bill in Lok Sabha, Nehru said, which reflects his revolutionary mind, and without any eye on the electoral gains: "we are often told that divorce is something against the basic conventions and ideas of Hindu society. It seems to me that almost anything can be described that way because Hindu society is so wide, so broadbased and so varied that you can say anything about it either historically or as it actually exists today. While we talk about Hindu society, are we talking about a few high caste people or are we talking and thinking in terms of 250 or 300 million Hindus in this country". 15 And probably with a frown, Nehru went on, "when we want to impress other people with numbers, we shout we are 270 million Hindus. But when we come to brass tacks, as when we talk about reforms, we think of a certain small group at the top. We cannot have it both ways".16 Nehru, while discussing the provisions of Hindu Marriages Bill 1955 argued like a lawyer, a leader who was hell-bent on bringing about a change in the society through the instrument of law. He argued: "A Hindu Marriage is a religious ceremony, undoubtedly. But does it mean that it is a sacrament to tie up people who bite, who hate each other, who make life hell for each other? Is that a sacrament or a samskara? I do not understand."17 Nehru would not compromise once he was convinced that he has to bring in social of reputed saints and sages were contrary to it. He said: "The point is, it is very unfair for Manu or Yagnavalkya or anybody else to be brought in as witness as to what should be done in present conditions of India. The conditions are completely and absolutely different...." This courage of conviction is sadly missing in public life today.

Nehru was greatly concerned about the plight of women in Hindu society, and he sincerely was interested to bring a change in the conditions of women through the instrument of law. He argued that in a democracy one could not cut off a large chunk of humanity, 50 per cent of the people, and put them in a class apart in regard to the social privilege and the like. "They are bound to revolt

and rightly".19 he said.

Nehru was thus convinced about the role and relevance of law as an instrument of social change in a democratic set up. In his own words: "A society needed 'surgical operations' to effect radical social A majority in a democratic assembly by passing a law — a very advanced law — performs an operation like that". 20

NEHRU was an ardent champion of independence of judiciary. He believed that Rule of Law would be possible only when judiciary was independent to administer laws. As he said: "And if there is to be a rule of law, there should be independent judges to administer the Law. Otherwise the law may be used not in the interest of the rule of law but exploi-

tated in other interests".21

M.C. Mahajan, the former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of India, while paying tributes to Nehru makes a mention of the fact that he was appointed to the Federal Court inspite of the opposition of a Chief Justice of a leading High Court who happened to be a personal friend of Jawaharlal Nehru. Later, when Justice Mahajan was elevited as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court; he writes: "At the same time when my predecessor on the Supreme Court reached his superannuation age, many highly placed persons told me that it would a miracle if the Prime Minister agreed to my appointment as Chief Justice. believed that some of my decisions were too opposed to the Government's policies and actions and hence they said Nehru would not let go the opportunity of superseding me and appointing someone else in my place. He could have done so if he wanted to because it was not necessary to appoint a person as Chief Justice if he could not serve as such for even one year. But how wrong my informants were. More than two months before my appointment, the Home Minister gave a hint about my appointment to me and I am sure he could not have done it without knowing the mind of the Prime Minister".22 M.C. Mahajan pays highest tributes to Nehru about his great contribution and his attitude of complete non-interference with the work of judiciary. According to Mahajan: "If Nehru did not agree with any decision of the Supreme Court, he would go straight to the Parliament with an amendmeat of the law in question or even the

Digitized by Arya Samai Foundation the indiangowas legitimate constitutional change through legal provisions, even if the opinions judicial decisions.23

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It is a well-known fact that when the Bose Commission headed by Justice Bose found the illegal financial nexus between Mr. Mundra and the Congress Party in Mundra deals, Nehru was very much annoyed and passed on certain remarks which could be considered as casting aspersions on the judiciary. However, Nehru not only apologized to Justice Bose, but even to the Chief Justice of India.²⁴

Nehru was not very happy with the judicial system as it existed in India which was a legacy from the British. The situation has not changed much even today and one is reminded of Nehru when he said in Parliament in 1952: "My reputation in that large and very estimable community of lawyers in India has not been the best possible because, estimable as they are, I am afraid, I do not admire their profes-

It is not their fault, of course, the defect really lies with the judicial structure that we have inherited from the British which entails inordinate delay and expense. However efficacious this system may be, it really proves to be unjust in the end because of the excessive delay and expense it involves". 55 autobiography how Nehru mentions in his shocked he was during the Punjab Martial Law trials in 1919 when a very eminent leader of the legal profession insisted on the payment of the full fee, which was a huge fee from the victims of Martial Law, and one of them being a fellow lawyer, and many of these people had to borrow money or sell property to pay him. It was his experience with the lawyers which made Nehru remark in the Constituent Assembly that: "Lawyers have their uses in life; but they should not be spread everywhere".

As remarked earlier Nehru was a humanist. He was a modern man and his reactions to crime and the criminal were that of a reformist who viewed the situations and the individuals with a 'social mind'. According to him: "The fundamental fact about crime is that it is largely the outcome of a bad social order and the fault lies chiefly with society and little, if at all, with the individual who sins. Jail conditions may be improved but the real improvement that is needed is an improvement of the social order which exploits and starves and thus drives a man to crime".26

DURING the struggle for freedom, Nehru was greatly concerned about the Civil Liberties of the people. In 1936, Nehru launched a Civil Liberties Union and Rabindranath Tagore was appointed as its honorary President. The Union was to fight against the suppression of civil liberties by the alien rulers. Nehru issued a letter to the intellectuals and eminent public men of India: "In countries with a democratic background the greatest value is there fore attached to similar the most fore attached to civil liberty and people of the most diverse and mutually hostile opinions join together in a common attention of in a common attempt to protect this foundation of all liberty and activities all liberty and activity".27

Nehru must have been a sad person that in post-dependent India it 6.11 independent India it fell upon him to place curbs on

the personal liberties of the people. Ironically, Nehru the personal liberties of the people. Ironically, Nehru responsibilities of governance and administration, had to resort to anti-civil libertized means a supplied to resort to the social realities which consequently blurred the perceptions of common people in the Rule of Law in India. In the words of Nehru: "I have stood for the freedom of the individual and the group, and nothing pains me so much as that condition should arise in this country when civil liberties should be limited.... It pains me and hurts me that the very thing I condemned in the past should be indulged in by our governments". 28

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The great curbs on the civil liberty and individual freedom came in the form of Preventive Detention Act of 1950 which was modified in 1951 and 1952. Nehru appears to have not realised that it was a new won freedom and the liberty, and the euphoria would continue for sometime and ultimately it would abate. He thought that his government was under the siege from various quarters. According to Nehru the threats came mainly from three quarters in the shape of the Communists, the Communalists and the Jagirdars who were out to indulge in anti-social and violent activities. "Now, you may ban the terrorist organisation or the Communist Party in Bengal, but how are you going to deal with individuals who function like that?"29

Nehru, whatever his philosophical paradigms, had to come to grips with realities in post-independent India. He must have realised that it is not always possible to invoke inner and good qualities of human beings. Sometimes strong and stringent arm of law and its implementation is needed to maintain the social order. In the face of social disorders he even found the legal system to be inadequate. On this behalf the following letter issued by Nehru to Chief Ministers is an illustration to the point:

"We have taken strong action frequently for the maintenance of public order. We have not hesitated to put people under detention or to proceed against them in law courts if they are offenders against public order. We have not shown the same earnestness in dealing with other anti-social activities, such as those indulged in by hoarders, black-marketeers and those who indulge corrupt practices ... Perhaps our whole social structure and legal system have not been fashioned to meet such emergencies. If so, we shall have to think seriously of changing that structure or machinery..."30

Nehru was aware that due to illiteracy and ignolance people did not realise their responsibilities in a democratic set up. As a pragmatist and as an administrator, Nehru found the convenient way in the shape of anti-Civil Liberties Ordinances and Laws. Nehru argued: "India's political structure and many laws are similar to those of British, but there is vital discountry, and that is vital difference between our country and that compact liference between our country and traditions compact little island with centuries-old traditions and disciplinate island with centuries and above and disciplined behaviour by the citizens and above all the Rule of Law ... but only a few years have elapsed since of Law ... but only a few years have

elapsed since our country emerged from servitude". The post The post-independent developments at the political vel and service bad a different level and political processes in India had a different impact on Nicel processes in India had a different about impact on Nehru's psyche. His perceptions about man and methods. After man and matters appear to have changed. After assuming the reigns of power and shouldering the

were completely different than what he had visualised from the ivory towers. It appears that Nehru the intellectual was always at logger heads with Nehru the politician. The mass participation of people in the political processes is a logical consequence of the democratic system. There is also a fierce competition among varying and competing political parties. The newly acquired freedom coupled with much publicised constitutional conceptions of liberty equality and fraternity heightened the expectations of the masses. Moreover, with the departure of Gandhi from the Indian socio-political scene the politics had started becoming devoid of values. It gave the impression that all around there was a lumpen proletariat who could be manipulated by the politicians and the political parties.

Nehru was greatly concerned about the process of 'de-individualisation' which led to the 'brutalisation' of individual man due to many reasons, particularly his assimilation in the 'crowd'. Nehru thought that the result of this assimilation was the mass mentality which tended to be devoid of reason. In his own words: "More and more the individual is giving way to the crowd. When he is by himself, he can be approached and he is responsive to reason. The crowd seldom places the reins on itself that the individual often feels compelled to do. The crowd dominates the individual but lacks a conscience of its own ... The crowd is a brute. The crowd terrifies me."32

NEHRU wanted to build an India free from want, poverty, illiteracy and superstition. He wanted to deal with all the problems and even life itself with a scientific approach. As a democrat he believed in the efficacy of law as an instrument of social change.

The economic development of the country was Nehru's main concern as well as anxiety. He had to oversee the functioning of varied processes, viz; development, constitutionalism, individual liberty and Rule of Law in a newly independent State. The political violence perpetuated due to varied factors like caste, communal and linguistic conflicts and social disorders accentuated by displaced economic and vested interest groups distressed Nehru a great deal. He might have visualised the scenerio much earlier when he had remarked that: "Whatever the legal aspect of the thing might be, there are moments when law is a feeble reed to rely upon."53

Inspite of some stringent legal and administrative measures adopted by the government headed by Jawaharlal Nehru, one cannot conclude that Nehru had shifted his stand and had become an authoritarian. A lot many things can be said on both the sides in this behalf. (*) However, fact remains that

tions, Indian Law Institute) pp. 72-93.

Also, Honderich, J. Violence for Equality; Gurr, T.R. Why Men Rebel.

^(*) The debate in regard to 'development', constitutionalism and political violence is still going on. The discussion regarding compatibility of two varying variables, viz. violence to achieve legitimate political ends and the rule of law in a democratic set up is yet inconclusive.

The thought provoking discussion on the subject has been initiated by Prof. Upendra Baxi in violence, Dissent And Development (Law and Social Change: Indo-American Reflec-

Nehru was a champion of democracy by Aryan Salvaj 56 undarion Chennal and Rearranted Yudin, On the Basic Approach

Nehru was a champion of democracy by Aryan Salvaj 60 undarion Chennal and Rearranted Yudin, On the Basic Approach

Nehru was a champion of democracy by Communicat Party Publications, (1958). Law. Nothing can be fitting as the tribute paid by Lord Attlee to Nehru in these words: "It seems to me that Nehru is a synthesis of the ideas of the East and West. He understands both. He is a product of the West; and he is also today the leader of the greatest democracy in Asia. It is my profound hope that the contest between democratic world and the authoritarian will be fought out not in warfare but in the minds of man and in the ideological sphere. Asia is a battleground of these ideas and we are lucky that, thanks very largely to Nehru, India stands out in this combat as the champion of the freedom, democracy and the Rule of Law."34

The events in the sub-continent have proved Lord

Attlee right.

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Gandhi, Gorbachev and India Today-V

S.G. SARDESAL

This is the fifth and concluding part of a pamphlet written by veteran CPI leader and Marxist ideologue S.G. Sardesai being serialised in Mainstream. The first, second, third and fourth parts appeared in the Mainstream issues of April 29, May 6, May 13, and May 20, 1989 respectively. -Editor

XV. New Issues, New Approach, New Movements

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Very serious attention will have to be given to this question. I have already dealt with a number of such issues in the previous sections. I am suggesting some more that deserve consideration.

I will begin with one I have been thinking about recently.

Some time ago the CITU organised an admirable one-week strike of workers in Delhi and its environs from Faridabad to Ghaziabad.

Obviously, these workers included Hindus. Muslims, Sikhs and Harijans, both men and women.

And they were solidly united in the strike.

Can Communists and the trade unions and youth and student organisations under their leadership in this area organise a massive procession in Delhi in support of communal peace and harmony and against Khalistani terrorism and Hindu and Muslim communalism? I think we can. If not a procession, a mass rally can surely be organised. An appeal to the followers of all secular and democratic parties, tuling and non-ruling, can also be made to join the procession.

In Punjab, Communist-led trade unions have maintained the solid unity of Sikh and Hindu workers despite all efforts by the Khalistanis and Hindu communalists to divide them. To a considerable extent our Kisan Sabha and Khet Mazdur Union have succeeded in keeping the agricultural workers (Hindu, Sikh, Harijan) together and saved them from both Sikh and Hindu communalism. So my suggestion is by no means impractical.

Similar actions can also be organised appealing to the leaders of the Babri Masjid Coordination Committee and the Coordination Committee and the Coordination Com mittee and the Rama Janmabhoonii Vimochan Committee to the Rama Ja mittee to settle their dispute amicably and by mutual negotiation. Meanwhile, both should desist from resorting to Meanwhile, both should desist from resorting to actions that aggravate the conflict and enhance communal tension. If they cannot come to a mutual accommunal tension. mutual agreement they should be appealed to allow the Masilal entry that the taken over by the Masjid and the Rama temple to be taken over by the archeological department.

Recently, a Muslim youth conference was held in

Delhi which made very reasonable proposals for an amicable settlement of this issue. They can be invited to join the action.

Take the question of sati and dowry killings. Is it only a question of women? It is a question of the entire democratic movement. And yet only women's organisations organise processions and demonstrations on the issue. Why do not our trade unions, youth and students organisations, and secular-democratic parties take up these issues and organise suitable forms of action?

Going by press reports, only, artists and their organisations protested against the diabolical murder of Safdar Hashmi. So also the Press. Why did workers, students and youth organisations not take up the issue which shocked all decent people and would have secured a massive response cutting across

normal political affiliations?

I will pass on to other subjects. In some of my other writings I have explained that the closely interconnected issues of the debt trap, self-reliance, swadeshi and the New International Economic Order have become an extremely important problem for our economy. They are a crucial issue of the struggle against imperialism. They affect all classes and sections of our people and have great mass appeal. Left parties, our trade unions, youth and student organisations can organise powerful demonstrations on this question. This is not at all difficult. Then why is the problem completely neglected?

The problems of ecology and the urban crisis have become literally frightening. All experts point out that if the issue of atmospheric pollution, and the excruciating condition of urban transport, water supply, sanitation, housing etc. are not dealt with on a war-footing we will be faced with an explosive

situation within a few years.

On these questions various organisations have been holding conferences and organising all manner of demonstrative actions. Only the Lefts and their mass organisations are not in the picture though these issues can build an all-in popular unity going far beyond what can be achieved on any other issue. Besides, these are not just Seva Samiti issues. They are first rate political questions related to the activities of multinational corporations (as for example,

the Union Carbide at Bhopal). Digitized by Arya Carrier Foetnet item and and eGangotri cannot be solved without the nationalisation of urban land and drastic action against speculative building contractors.

Is it not strange that our activity on this entire question is limited to securing relief for slum dwellers? That is necessary but does not touch even the fringe of the entire problem of the urban crisis.

The recent SAARC meeting has opened up promising prospects of improved relations and cooperation between the countries of this region. The restoration of democracy in Pakistan with the election of Benazir Bhutto as Prime Minister has given a new dimension to SAARC. This was the first meeting of the Association in which the dominant spirit was of amity and mutual understanding as contrasted with the previous meetings characterised by distrust and

Peace, good neighbourliness and cooperation between the SAARC countries is not only in their mutual interest but is a vital necessity for their

security and progress.

But, till now, SAARC has functioned only at the state level. This time the idea of people-to-people good neighbourliness was also accepted. Exchange of popular delegations for building mutual friendship

was one of the decisions of the meeting.

Every effort has to be made to make SAARC a peoples' movement. Not only cultural but other kinds of delegations can be exchanged. Only then will the aim of SAARC get a firm and stable foundation. The All-India Peace and Solidarity Organisation (AIPSO) and other mass organisations can take a lead in the matter.

That brings me to the question that within our country culture and all problems related to it have become a highly political issue. Unfortunately, it is various reactionary and disruptive forces that are making the maximum use of this weapon for their offensive against all progressive and democratic

Take the question of history. Hindu, Sikh and Muslim reactionaries are perverting Indian history for communal purposes on a scale that we have never experienced before. The Vishwa Hindu Parishad and Shiv Sena hold conferences and rallies attended by lakhs in which poison is pumped into the minds of the people in the name of the ancient spiritual heritage of Indian civilisation. Linguistic and tribal chauvinists are doing it in the name of their cultural tradition. Newspapers with a huge circulation are also used for the purpose.

Even our schools and colleges have been invaded

by the same perversion of history.

Besides, religious superstition, extremely harmful to the development of a rational and scientific outlook in the younger generation, is being spread on an unprecedented scale. Newspapers, radio, television, all are competing with one another in this holy crusade. The Vedas, Ramayana, Mahabharata, Adi Shankarcharya, all are being harnessed for that purpose. In addition to superstition, the popularisation of in egalitarian values of the caste system and the position of women in ancient India, is also being done in the name of India's glorious ancient

And all this cultural perversion is exploited for reactionary political interests.

This pernicious offensive cannot be countered ex-

cept by an organised, mass counter-offensive.

We urgently need weeklies and monthlies, in English and the Indian languages, to refute the distortion of ancient and medieval Indian history and present the true picture to the people. What was really progressive and what was reactionary in our historical development? Which were the forces that championed scientific and humanist values and who opposed them? All this has to be carried to the people. And if our counter-offensive is to become effective it cannot be undertaken in a casual manner as if it were some side issue. It will have to be done in an organised manner as a major political task.

In the end, I want to refer to a very important issue, a historically new phenomenon. I do not want to draw any sweeping conclusions from it because it needs very serious study before any such conclusions can be drawn. Fantasy has no place in histori-

cal science.

Traditionally, epoch-making changes within various countries and in the relations between nations have resulted from revolutionary changes within one or another country. The great French revolution carried the torch of democracy across the continent of Europe, and the Soviet socialist revolution in Russia heralded the era of socialism on a world scale.

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This process is surely continuing and revolutionary movements in different countries have not stopped.

They are going to be there.

But, simultaneously, the wheel of historical progress has begun to turn in a new-way all over the world.

At the close of 1988, innumerable political leaders and newspapers in practically all the countries of the world noted that 1988 was the best and the most hopeful year in the sphere of international relations since the end of the Second World War. Tensions and conflicts, the Democles sword of war hanging over the head of mankind were giving place to the reduction of tensions, alleviation of the danger of war, mutual agreements in the place of confrontation, and so on.

Surely, this turn, though as yet halting and not stable, was not accidental. It was not the result of

the benign grace of God.

In this connection I am reminded of a statement made by Krupskaya to a Press correspondent. I am not able to locate its precise source and hope some readers will be able to locate it.

But I am clear about what she said. According to her, Lenin once remarked that wars were becoming so costly that nations will gain nothing by resorting

to war.

That is precisely what is happening now. The imperialist globe-trotters have not become altruistic. They have not become doves carrying the olive branch of peace. But, more and more, they are realising that war and aggression cannot achieve their aim of global domination. All it can achieve is suicide.

And simultaneously, another development of the significance is also taking place. Warmonger- that government ing in the age of the scientific technological revolution and atomic power involves an astronomical expenditure on armaments which even US imperialism cannot bear. It is not only that it has become impossible for the Third World to repay its debts to the imperialists. Militarisation has landed the USA in a debt of trillions of dollars which it is unable to repay. And, of course, such a diversion of economic resources has brought misery and destitution to the lowest sections of the American population.

That means that both military and economic factors are compelling the imperialists, however, tardily to reconsider and modify their policies. Combined with the new policies of Gorbachev based on his profound understanding of the realities of the new world, international relations are taking a new turn.

And that turn is from war and militarisation to peace and disarmament.

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That, again, brings in a new approach to settling the problems of the Third World countries. The vital need of these countries is liberation from the exploitative and aggressive policies of neo-colonialism (both economic and military) and the right of self-determination. Only that can enable them to solve their crucial problem of hunger, poverty and destitution.

Let me illustrate the point. Namibia has been groaning under the jackboot of the South African racists for seven decades. Its people have been fighting for freedom ever since it was enslaved. They have passed through immense suffering made untold sacrifices. Namibian freedom could not have been won without this epic struggle. At the same time, its freedom is now coming not in the manner of the traditional wars of national liberation. It is coming through an agreement between Angola, Cuba and South Africa which the latter has had to accept. Both the USSR and the USA are supporting the agreement.

Proceeding further, there is no doubt that the freedom of Namibia is going to give tremendous strength to the struggle of the Blacks in South Africa for freedom and democracy. And that means the liquidation of apartheid in South Africa.

Take the question of West Asia. The Palestinian problem has been the most intractable and explo-Sive problem since the end of the Second World War. The Palestinian people have suffered and Sacrificed for the right of self-determination as probably very few people have done in history. On the other hand, the Zionist rulers of Israel, backed by the US rulers, far from heeding the almost universal demand for Palestinian freedom, have been grahhim grabbing more and more Arab territory. Till a year ago, the conflict appeared to be endless. No light could be seen at the end of the tunnel.

And yet, most unexpected and welcome developments took place during the last year. The PLO leadership has abjured armed struggle for achieving its aim, it has recognised the right of Israel to exist as an independent state, and simultaneously declared itself as the endert state. A itself as the Government of Palestine (in exile). A that government.

Side by side the USA has recognised the PLO (though not as a government) and agreed to negotiate with it. The powerful Jewish lobby in the USA is veering in the same direction. And the latest reports, quite authentic, are that about fifty per cent of the population of Israel and a good number of Israeli military officers are also in favour of a negotiated settlement with the PLO.

Only a year ago, such a development was considered almost inconceivable. Then how has it taken place? Is it a miracle? No. It is an indication that the wheel of history has begun to turn in a new way.

What I mean is that traditionally the national and social liberation process has advanced from below, from the grassroots level. That process continues. But now it is also taking place from above, through the modification and restructuring of international relations. That is what is new in the developmental process of world history.

I need not go into other illustrations which are quite well-known.

As yet, this process is expressing itself dominantly in international relations. But it has an application to the internal problems of every country. There, too, what seems inconceivable today is going to become realisable, gradually and in course of time.

And what is the new turn that world history is taking? It is a turn towards peace, disarmament, development, a New International Economic Order and a planned improvement in popular living standards. It is a turn from dependence and subjugation towards genuine national freedom and democracy. It is a turn from confrontation to dialogue, to negotiated settlements in the mutual interest of contending parties, to international goodwill and cooperation in the common interest of free and equal nations, small or big.

The ultimate end is yet far off. The dangers are still very grave. It is a path of zigzags and pitfalls. But the end is a new, humane, fully democratic socialism.

And the basic reason for this turn is that, at the close of the twentieth century, humanity has only two alternatives before it. War and suicide, or peace and progress. This is where, in my opinion, the ideas of Gorbachev and the best traditions of Gandhi and Nehru coincide. Really speaking, we must also add to this list the names of Ho Chi Minh, Castro, Nyrere and a few others. Generations yet unborn will consider these figures as the new pantheon of the human race.

The conflicts and turmoil of day-to-day politics are there. But we need a new vision to carry us through the fog that envelops us.

That vision cannot be reached without discarding the hardened ruts of traditional thinking and action. It cannot be reached without grasping the reality of the new world and its problems and solutions.

That is the responsibility of all Lefts, democrats and patriots in India. It is a challenge that cannot be avoided. Are we going to answer the call of history? That is what is going to decide our country's future. (Concluded)

(Contd. from page 34)

reference to India. Such a course would cover the contributions made to the development of a humanistic outlook by the various religions, by outstanding thinkers, by Marxism and the different schools of socialist thought, as well as by modern science many of whose findings are supportive of the concepts of humankind's oneness and of the ecological relatedness of all life on earth."

It will be well worth amending Article 28 of the Constitution, referred to earlier, not only to make this possible but to require such a course - suitably graded for different age groups - to be a compulsory part of general education in all schools and colleges, whether run by local bodies and govern-

ments or by religious minorities.

Cadres for the Renaissance: Young people who are given the opportunity of a value-based education are more likely to offer themselves to work as cadres for

the realisation of India's renaissance.

The history of political democracies the world over has shown that adult suffrage and secret ballot are necessary but not sufficient conditions for the economic, social and intellectual liberation of the masses. The emancipation of disadvantaged groupswhether Harijans, backward castes or women-requires action by dedicated workers to raise their political consciousness and to organise them to secure their rights. Without this, the poor and the exploited tend to give their votes to demagogues rather than to true representatives of their interests. privilege of casting a vote once in five years brings them only some crumbs from the well-stocked tables of the privileged. Democracy becomes a facade that hides gross inequalities.

Unfortunately the largest of India's political parties is not cadre-based. During the freedom movement, the Congress tradition was of voluntary and unpaid public work. Jawaharlal Nehru recalls in his autobiography a suggestion made in 1924 that the Congress general secretaries should be paid: "I happened to be one of the secretaries then and I welcomed the proposal. It seemed to me quite wrong to expect whole-time work from anyone without paying him a maintenance allowance at least. Otherwise some person with private means has to be chosen, and such gentlemen of leisure are not perhaps always politically desirable, nor can they be held responsible for the work. But there is in India an extraordinary and thoroughly unjustified prejudice against receiving salaries from public funds (though not from the State), and my father strongly objected to my doing so.'

Gandhiji always placed lower value on work in the legislatures than on constructive work among the people. After watching the performance of Congress legislators and Congress governments in the provinces for a year, he wrote on September 3, 1938: "It looks as if Congressmen are not able to digest the power that has come to the Congress. Every one wants to have a share in the spoils of office. This is not the way to win Swaraj.'

In the draft of a new constitution for the Congress

Raghavan: Development & Communication which Gandhiji prepared on January 29, 1948 and revised the revi martyrdom — he suggested disbanding the Congress as a propaganda vehicle and parliamentary machine and setting up a Lok Sevak Sangh. It was not as if Gandhiji had no use for the political process. He wanted the Sangh's volunteers to check the voters' roll and encourage people to acquire the legal qualifications for the right of franchise. (This was before the Constitution, conferring universal adult franchise. came into force.) The volunteers were to promote "equal respect and regard for all religions and equality of opportunity and status for all, irrespective of race, creed or sex." On the question of funds for the Lok Sevak Sangh, Gandhiji's draft said: "The Sangh shall raise finance for the fulfilment of its mission from among the villagers and others, special stress being laid on collection of poor man's pice.'

It was not to be expected that the Mahatma's advice would be headed by the Congress leaders who had entered the Viceroy's Executive Council in 1946 (euphemistically describing it as an 'Interm Government') and were by then, with the transfer of power, in full command of the government. But instead of letting the government rely entirely on civil servants for the tasks of popular education and programme implementation, the Congress could have invited volunteers for nation-building work on a remuneration adequate for their maintenance on a modest standard of living. They could have been trained to act both as an aid and - through candid feed-back on the people's felt needs and their reactions to official programmes — as a corrective to the government. Such a scheme would have attracted educated young men and women with social conscience and a sense of mission, prepared to make their contribution to social change on emoluments less than what they could earn by joining the rat race. One does not have in mind the kind of young people whom the Congress-I has actually attracted during the last two decades; most of them are politicians on the make rather than volunteers for a cause.

It can still be done. There is the experience, over the years, of organisations like the Servants of India Society and the Ramakrishna Mission to draw upon. Political parties of the Left, too, have maintained their cadres through contributions made regularly by sympathisers of their cause. The work of a voluntary organisation of integrity is vastly more cost-effective than that of bureaucratically organised welfare departments; moreover, volunteers raise the level of social consciousness among the people alongside the promotion of welfare. This is known to potential donors who would like to help with money even if they cannot give their time to social causes.

There are also large numbers of potential volunteers among educated young people. They would like to apply their talents and energies to improving the condition of those less fortunate than themselves. But if there is no organisation that can utilise their services and maintain them on a living wage, they turn like most others to a remunerative career. Howsoever distasteful they may find it initially, they soon get sucked into careerism. Their social concern evaporates and they begin to look G

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This should not be allowed to happen. What is required therefore is the formation of voluntary organisations in all parts of the country to meet the most pressing local needs. These needs may be both material — like safe drinking water, sanitation and improved productivity — and non-material — like literacy, social education to promote attitudinal change, and organisation of the disadvantaged so that they can secure in actuality the rights granted by laws or the facilities promised under official pro-

India's renaissance requires volunteers from each local community, who will live among the common people and talk to them in their language and dialect, not job-seekers aspiring to join the State or Central government services. Family planning is the classic example of the futility of the official approach based on one-way communication. The programme has generated much employment for the educated middle class and for specialists, but the vast expenditure has yielded next to no results. Family planning personnel are expected to fulfil targets one way or another, not to ascertain and tell the government the truth. The truth is that, for the poor, each pair of hands brings in more than what it takes to keep one mouth fed at bare subsistance level.

The poverty alleviation programmes have also generated much government employment. But have any of the employees at any level, told their supervisors the truth they must have learnt from their experience, that poverty cannot be abolished through a separate programme? The eradication of poverty must be the central aim governing all investment and all programmes. We cannot race towards socialism by the Maruti car.

Peace for Progress: Unproductive military expenditure imposes the biggest single resource constraint on development. Communicators concerned about development - as journalists, academics or political and social activists — should therefore try and create a non-hysterical climate of public opinion that will permit the settlement of disputes with neighbouring countries on the basis of give-and-take. This requires giving up the 'sacred territory' fetishism of the nation-state.

What we mean by the term 'nation' is really the people living in a political state whose boundaries are the product of the accidents of history. Bangladesh and Pakistan formed one 'nation-state' from 1947 till 1971. West Bengal and Bangladesh, and the Indian and Pakistani Punjabs, like the two Germanys and the two Koreas, are examples of nations or sub-nations divided by the borders of political states.

The humanism which is of the essence of Indian secularism, and of the social harmony on the basis of equal rights for all groups which we call national integrate integration, cannot surely come to an abrupt halt at the Political borders with Pakistan, China or other political borders with Pakistan, China or other neighbours. Indeed, the triumph of humanism on earth will be when a global confederation united the will be when a global confederation and unites the family of man under the protection and

same way as the political state now holds its citizens together. The modern political state is a half-way house in human progress from the tribes and feudal kingdoms of the past to a world government of the future.

Like other vertical divides - sex, race, language, religion and caste - the political state hides internal contradictions and is a convenient rallying cry. The nationalism of a subjugated people is an assertion of self-respect and a heroic impulse entailing sacrifice and suffering. In contrast, nationalist feeling among the people of an independent country can be turned into chauvinism and exploited by demagogues and power-mongers for their profit at the expense of the common people. The military-industrial-political complex is a reality in modern states of all ideological orientation. The decades after World War II have seen not only the USA and the USSR but the USSR and Communist China on the brink of war, while numerous Third World countries have been actually at war with each other. In India, as in other countries, expansion of the armed forces offers opportunities to industrialists, construction contractors and traders, as well as to educated youth in terms of careers. There are also, for the unscrupulous among politicians, officials and business men, kickbacks in the multi-crore purchases of foreign armament purchases which illustrate the diversified dependence we have ended up with after much talk of selfreliance.

Jawaharlal Nehru was at once a nationalist who fought tenaciously for India's freedom, and a votary of world government. Eight years before independence, he said in a note circulated to his colleagues

Just Out!

THE BOOK REVIEW

March/April 1989 issue

Reviews by S. Gopal, Bhisham Sahni, P.C. Chatterjee, Arif A. Waqif, Laksbmi Kannan and others. Also excerpts from Prem Bhatia's Of Many Pastures.

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union of free and equal nations may lead to a voluntary limitation of sovereignty; it will help planning within nations." Nehru lived to see the peevishness and rigidity of attitude which a feeling of hurt national pride caused in India in relation to Pakistan and Communist China. He insisted on the freeing of Sheikh Abdullah of Kashmir after a protracted conspiracy trial in which nothing was proved, and thereafter sent him on an exploratory mission of conciliation to Pakistan. Sheikh Abdullah had to abandon the mission on Nehru's death.

Nehru experienced the same problem of an inflamed public opinion in relation to China during the closing years of his life which saw a decline in his authority and influence. In a letter of September 26, 1959 to Chou En-lai, Nehru told the Chinese Premier that the Indian government had not given publicity till very recently to the information which it had about many encroachments by the Chinese on Indian soil, "in the hope that peaceful solutions of the disputes could be found by agreement by the two countries without public excitement on both sides. In fact our failure to do so has now resulted in sharp but legitimate criticism of the Government both in Parliament and the Press in our country.'

In this atmosphere, Nehru could not accept the proposal made by Chou En-lai in his reply of November 7, 1959 that, pending talks between the two Prime Ministers, "the armed forces of China and India each withdraw 20 kms. at once from the so-called McMahon Line in the east and from

in the National Planning Committee by Arya Sandi Foutballine human and egangolil was the mismanagement union of free and equal nations may lead to a voluntrol in the west. Such was the mismanagement of our military affairs in these years that, after the hostilities three years later, China was able to impose on India a ceasefire on worse terms. The line of actual control as of November 21, 1962 out much deeper into Indian territory than the 1959

A quarter of a century has passed since the line of actual control virtually became the international boundary between India and China. Vis-a-vis Pakistan, the line of actual control has similarly been the de facto international border since 1971. Though all three countries ritually reiterate their territorial claims, few seriously expect any of them to attempt altering the existing position by force. The territories in the adverse possession of Pakistan and China from India's point of view are among the most barren and sparsely populated anywhere in the world. In Ladakh the occupied territory was so lightly administered by the British and subsequently by us that we did not know till after the event that the Chinese had constructed a road across Aksai Chin.

When the super powers on the one hand and the two big Communist countries on the other have moved towards better relations, is it right for us to remain frozen in our attitude? Should we not take the initiative to convert the uneasy lines of actual control, with suitable adjustments on the basis of give and take, into secure frontiers of

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In the Name of Panditji

CHANDRA CHARI

I^T was the 14th of November 1988. In the wintry dusk, long queues wound their way through the imposing gates of Teen Murti House and added steadily to the swelling numbers on the lawns waiting

to hear Lata Mangeshkar.

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Unlike other years this was to be a slick production heralding the start of Jawaharlal Nehru's birth centenary year. The polished young usher at one counter handing out large plastic bags for the visitors' shoes looked up into the perplexed face that was none too clear of a small girl. "What do I do with this bag?" she queried. "It is for your shoes" was the answer. The bag was handed back to the usher politely: "I don't have any shoes".

Musty senlimentalism? Maybe, when callousness is a norm. But that poignant moment has mocked every gala extravaganza on that day and the following weeks and months of the Centenary celebrations of one of the most humane individuals, the undoubt-

ed darling of the masses, of our times.

Apart from the fact that Jawaharlal Nehru abhorred all forms of exhibitionism in celebrating the memory of great leaders, one of the constant refrain of his speeches on record was: "I can tolerate that adults should forego somethings for some time; but I cannot tolerate it if even a single child in India, boy or girl, is deprived of the basic necessities of life." And yet, more than forty years of freedom later, for children in their millions in India, deprivation is a fact of life to be patiently borne.

A true homage to the memory of Panditji would have been to have declared all children of parents below certain income groups to be the wards of the nation, with the very limited objective of putting two square meals a day in the stomachs sagging with hunger. No new thought this. Nor is the money in short supply. All it needs is a little initiative to mop up the available resources and channelise it into a venture which would show results within weeks in healthier bodics, brighter eyes and minds aroused from apathy born of perennial undernourishment.

A simple scheme would be to set up a national trust fund for the children of India headed by the Prime Minister and managed by philanthropists and leaders cutting across party lines. Every earning member in the country should be invited to adopt. to adopt a child for the purposes of providing two souare meals a day. It has been worked out separately by voluntary agencies in different parts of the country that Rs 50 per child per month would suffice. If Rs 50 per month is too much to spare true. spare, two or five earning members could jointly

The author is editor of The Book Review. Guruktheaexchetpaten. Haridwar

subscribe for one child. On the other hand the rich, the industrialists, businessmen and even civil servants could sponsor ten, hundred or even a thousand children per month. If an incentive is needed, rebate on income tax can always be a lure.

The logistics too need not be complicated. The experience of the southern states has already shown that schools are an ideal target. In the rural areas in particular it would be an extra bonus to the much publicised literacy campaign to provide a meal at mid-day. Two, since child labour cannot be wished away by legislation, work places where a large number of children are employed could be another target place. Four rotis a day made of flour mixed with a handful of soyabeans with a katori of dal could go a long way towards retrieving the poor children from an almost zombie-like existence.

The larger than 'life panchayat raj' system could well be entrusted with the one task before all else of monitoring the scheme of providing two meals a day to every poor child. The village women would be more than happy to be co-opted into the task of cooking and providing fuel for the chulhas. In the cities, committees of women could be set up

in every colony for the same purpose.

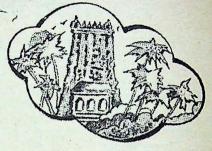
Objections to even such simple scheme there can and will be in plenty. Misuse of funds? Misappropriation? All of that certainly but once the mothers are motivated, they would fight tooth and nail to get food into their children's stomachf. One drawback could very well be the caste-divisions in the rural areas which prevent the children of the so-called lower castes from coming anywhere near the food. Local voluntary groups can be roped in to prevent such distortions of the scheme.

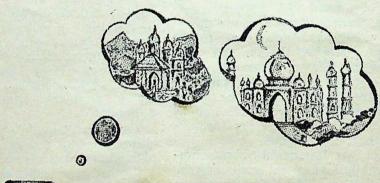
If the scheme succeeds, there is no reason why the multifarious IRDP, NREP or Jawahar Rozgar Yojana funds could not be streamlined to set up cooperative dairy farms managed by women to provide a glass of milk as well to the children. is no secret that in several States funds for welfare schemes for women and children lapse every year because there is no agency to take up the tasks.

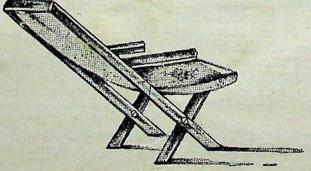
The Government could make available rations of wheat and rice to the community kitchens for the children from the State godowns via the fair

price shops.

None of this is impossible. It need not even be very difficult. So why not a simple pledge from the Nation to the memory of Panditji while the State churns out its quota of extravaganzas? The thing is, even as an election gimmick, this scheme would pay much more dividends than two free saris per woman, for instance, and - at no extra cost to A Tribute To Respected Elders







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BOOK REVIEW

A Bunch of Vignettes

H.S.

NEHRU: The Making of India by M. J. Akbar (Publishers: Viking in association with Rupa, 1989; Price Rs. 377).

M. J. AKBAR's quest for Nehru leads him into very broad pastures. It is not Nehru the man alone who engages his attention but the entire story of India through a century of struggle for independence. The Nehru family chronicle rapidly gets intertwined with the larger drama of the fight against the British. As the perspective expands, the important figures of the national movement keep breaking in to jostle with Nehru and his family, and biography takes on the trappings of history.

It would be impossible perhaps to tell the story of Nehru in any other way. At an early age he became enslaved by the national cause, and thereafter his private life was swamped by public affairs. His family and friends were all drawn in, and it is rare to find a purely private moment in his crowded life. Akbar has not attempted to write a strictly political biography. He goes in search of Nehru the man, tracing the story of Nehru's ancestors in their journey from the Vale of Kashmir and their transformation into a prosperous and prominent family of Allahabad. This family story is set against the background of a society recovering its self-confidence after the severe trauma of the wars of 1857. Akbar brings into his narrative the major religious and social movements of the time, the rise of new beliefs and cults, the birth of the Congress and other important developments.

Such a broad-brush method is not without dangers that the author does not always succeed in avoiding. The details can become fuzzy, the judgements unsubstantiated. Here is one such: "For a pat on the back and a knighthood, Sayyid Ahmad Khan happily denounced the bravery of those numerous Muslims who fought the British in the wars of 1857". So cavalier a dismissal of one of the major figures of the time seems to show that the author

The author who is a well-known Indian diplomat, prefers anonymity, behind the initials. An earlier review of Akbar's book by K. Natwar Day 1989).

sometimes prefers the easy quip to a more measured

judgement.

While one may cavil at the method, one cannot help being swept along by the narrative. Akbar's tale is not new, but yet well worth re-telling, and he tells it with verve and panache. If he is free with opinions, he provides also a crackling and engrossing text. Nehru's life is the stuff of modern epic. The familiar story does not lose its power to enthral. Akbar's version is not a search for the hero's feet of clay. He sees his protagonist, as do the bulk of his countrymen, as a leader of heroic proportion who continues to inspire. He draws mainly, almost exclusively, from published material. Thus there are few surprises in the text, either of fact or of reinterpretation.

The author is especially concerned to look at the communal issue as a prime factor in the politics of the age. His earlier writings show that in his scheme the real enemy to be combated is communalism. Those who fight against 'the monster' merit his approval. Among these, of course, none shines more brilliantly than Nehru. In telling his story, Akbar is at pains to show Nehru's secular politics, for this part of his legacy remains immensely relevant. Equally significant is the expression of national, patriotic sentiment which Nehru articulated with greater feeling and eloquence than anyone else. The cause of the country, the theme of national

unity took precedence over all else.

It is entirely fitting that a biography of Nehru should dwell on such themes. These are the secular virtues of modern India. They need to be reiterated again and again. But such sentiments may not be the best guide to recent history. The implicit didacticism can cause distortions. Akbar's treatment of the Khilafat Movement is a case in point. True, that was a time of Hindu-Muslim unity which promised much. But the Movement was not based on even the pretence of secular sentiment. The magic of Gandhi's leadership papered over some of the awkward gaps, and one cannot decry the genuine cooperation achieved among the two communities. Yet Maulana Mohammed Ali's erratic later course. which took him in and out of the Muslim League and saw him lined up so often on the opposite side to former colleagues, points to some of the inherent limitations of the Khilafat Movement. Akbar prefers not to see that temporary national unity was achieved in a manner that would have aborted the

secular frame. It was thus pointing to a very different type of Indian policy to that for which his hero Jawaharlal was striving.

In his account of Nehru's early life Akbar presents a revealing portrait of Motilal. The fame of his illustrious son has overshadowed the father, so it is useful to be reminded how independent a force he was in national affairs. His was a confident and exuberant personality. His personal style and his strong beliefs, including his work for Hindu-Muslim unity, were part of his legacy to his son. In Gandhiji's often-quoted remark, Motilal's most striking quality was love for his son, which drew him into the national movement. Akbar makes us aware of the son's love for his father and what this signified in the making of the future Prime Minister.

In building up his story, the author ranges back and forth chronologically, choosing what seems to him interesting or relevant to Nehru's life. This method can sometimes prove confusing for there is no sustained flow. To an extent, this large tome is a series of vignettes. The connecting tissue is not always there. The account of inner Congress tensions appears curiously incomplete, even within the limited purposes of the book. Some of the stalwarts of the time are presented in a most unflattering light, like Madan Mohan Malviya and Lala Lajpat Rai. Ghanshyamdas Birla comes off badly as does Rajendra Prasad. None of these figures from the Right wing of the party is seen as untainted by communalism. Right or wrong, such judgements suffer from insufficient supporting evidence.

A more sustained attack is mounted on Jinnali and the Muslim League. Jinnah comes across as a cardboard villain with almost no redeeming features. The 1937 talks between Congress and League for a coalition are treated in black-and-white terms. Jinnah and the Muslim League will find few champions in India but excessive partisanship does not strengthen the author's case. One can accept the thrust of his thought while not being convinced by his manner of presentation.

Given the author's convictions, it is not surprising that the most passionately argued part of the book is the section dealing with partition. The vivi ection of the country arouses Akbar's ardour. In crisp polemical style he looks at the events of the time, the tantalising possibilities of agreement, the final failure to keep together. British policy, Muslim intransigence and Congress's inability to control matters are woven together into an absorbing narra-The biographer in Akbar yields precedence to the strongly committed political commentator. He is an uncompromising opponent of the idea of Pakistan, and this informs his view at every point.

With independence, a new phase starts. In any biography of Nehru, the transition from freedom fighter to Prime Minister is difficult to handle. M.J. Akbar is no more successful than many others. Less than a quarter of his text covers that portion of Nehru's life when he was India's Prime Minister. Perhaps it is unfair to expect more than the some-

growth of nationalist Muslim sentiment within a must still be largely undied. Even though the official archive must still be largely undisclosed, there is a huge volume of material for these years. To absorb it satisfactorily and to have something fresh to say would require a different sort of book. Besides, there is an obvious attraction in concentrating on the romantic leader of the liberation struggle, beating at the bastion of an alien establishment, rather than on the figure who becomes transformed into the centre of a new establishment

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In his treatment of this segment, Akbar adopts the method of focussing on a few of the significant developments of the days of independence. These include the war in Kashmir, the consolidation of Nehru's supremacy within the Party, the search for a socialist pattern of society, the growth of nonalignment, the relationship with his daughter and the border war with China. He uses the rather clumsy device of looking at 1955 as Nehru's annus mirabilis, when he was at his peak nationally and internationally. Nehru's achievements do not easily conform to the demands of the calendar, and Akbar has to force the material into an unwilling mould. Even so, he does succeed in conveying something of the quality of Nehru's leadership. Mostly he is greatly admiring, almost adulatory. The nearest he comes to criticising the great man is in his account of the Kashmir War. Nehru's decision to refer the matter to the United Nations is regarded as unwise, but even here it is suggested that Mountbatten badgered him

As may be expected of a popular columnist of the Indian press, Akbar's narrative is fast-paced and easy to read. It is occasionally rather prolix and over-insistent. Besides, the author seems to have adopted the device of accumulating a vast number of factual details, not all of which are relevant. For instance, when Gandhi was arrested in 1942, we are told that he breakfasted on his usual goat's milk and fruit juice before being led off to prison. Three pages later, Nehru follows him, but not before fortifying himself with cornflakes, eggs, bacon, toast and coffee. Notwithstanding such excesses, the book is easy and entertaining to read. It is thoroughly researched and the facts are well marshalled. One surprising error is the description of V.P. Menon as an ICS officer. As is well-known, Menon rose to great eminence through his outstanding merit, even though he did not have the advantage of belonging to the heaven-born tribe of the ICS.

Finally, it must be said that with all its merits, the book leaves one feeling that something vital is missing. Akbar gives us many of the facets of the leader, but does not penetrate to the inner man. It is not a question of plying us with hidden secrets, or with unexpected revelations. The man does not come alive on the page, so that we see him rather as a bundle of actions, opinions and ideas — attractive and compelling though they may be — and not as a human being confronting the dilemmas of leadership. The characteristics are ship to the characteristics and the characteristics are ship to the characteristics and the characteristics are ship to the characteristics are sh ship. The chronicle of India's modern history comes across more vividly than does the life story of Jawaharlal Nehru. 🗆

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and not withdrawn before the passage of the Finance Bill. It was Rajiv Gandhi himself, who, not long ago, had asked the bureaucrats to make these products the least expensive possible. He had given a very convincing economic rationale for such duty reliefs on electronic items. Surely, the union budget, while resurrecting the poor in an election year, could have tried to harmonise the goal of technological progress with that of equity.

As for the strategy for modernisation, even in its initial earnestness, it suffered from flaws, with the very approach marked by superficiality, and lacked supportive inputs from various disciplines which any coordinated policy would need. The Government generally overlooked the need for a new work culture and hard decisions related to labour policy, productivity, retraining programmes and quality control. It was not prepared to pay the political costs of phasing out the obsolete units.

With utter profligacy, repetitive imports of technology were allowed for the same components as if the country had discovered an inexhaustible source of foreign exchange. It was as if a museum of technologies from the east and west was being planned. Standardisation was not enforced and maintenance and servicing problems were ignored — all in the

name of liberalisation and competition.

To take just one example of the mismatch between new technology and inappropriate work culture, a battery manufacturer in Bombay came to grief for having invested heavily in a new assembly line in the hope of achieving enhanced productivity. The new line became a liability since the workers did not change their ways. He is yet to recover from this bout of modernisation.

The facile assumption in the Government circles seemed to be that a massive one-time infusion of imported technology would free the country permanently from obsolescence. Consequently, it is difficult to find today an industrial unit with the latest imported technology which has also laid the foundation for self-reliant development. Maruti, the premier public sector undertaking, imitated its Japanese collaborator in many respects but cannot yet boast of any significant design development capability. The R&D unit in the Maruti Udyog never got the pride

The fragmented and flawed approach to modernisation can be seen in the fatal obsession with the introduction of new superfast trains on the aged railway tracks. Modernisation should have begun with a massive programme for the renewal of tracks. Similarly, the new automobile policy was not conceived in conjunction with an appropriate road developing conjunction with an appropriate road development plan. Many had pointed out the incongruity of the lightweight high-speed Marutis jostling with topological with topological states and the lightweight high-speed Marutis jostling with topological states and the lightweight high-speed Marutis jostling with topological states and the lightweight high-speed Marutis jostling with topological states and the lightweight high-speed Marutis jostling with the lightweight high-speed Marutis with the lightweight high-speed Marutis with the lightweight with the lightweight high-speed Marutis with the lightweight high-speed Marutis with the lightweight with the lightweight high-speed Marutis with the lightweight high-speed Marutis with the lightweight with the lightweight high-speed Marutis with the lightweight with the lightweight high-speed Marutis with the lightweight wi with tongas and handcarts on pot holed roads. They are crowing today: "We had told you so".

Of contract of the post retrained and post retr

Of course, the Government did not retrace its steps because of a realisation of the inappropriateness of it favoured development model. It has been forced to backtrael. backtrack because of the resource crunch and growing adverse because the resource crunch and growing adverse because of the resource crunch and growing adverse crunc ing adverse public reaction in an election year. Un-

fortunately, modernisation and elitism have got clubbed together in the public mind. And no barefoot Sam Pitroda can now wipe out this impression.

If the strategy was flawed, prompt action also lacked with regard to issues relating to modernisation. The Government moved slowly. The technology policy statement of Indira Gandhi was dusted and brought out now and again for desultory meetings which decided nothing and only frustrated sincere bureaucrats. If the powerful committee of secretaries finalised something, that was never the end of it. Individual officials in different ministries then went to work on the same draft delaying final decisions. The proposal for a high-level technology information and forecasting council had to go through several metamorphic twists before a token gesture was made for its establishment. For long, a chairman could not be found and ultimately the council was turned into a part-time responsibility of an overengaged technocrat already running a public-sector empire.

Even as the full five-year term of a pro-modernisation government draws to a close, the policy planners and decision-makers lack a clear comprehensive picture of the technological gaps in the absence of industry wise technology status reports. The name "Technology Missions" was appropriated by what should have been called administrative missions. The Government which planned for a high growth rate of domestic air traffic, did nothing to set up an

indigenous aeronautics industry.

In some areas, the Government did not move forward and in others, where it did, it has started retreating. The reversal of some policies such as those relating to automobiles and computers, will make the earlier effort towards modernisation suboptimal and the foreign exchange investments infructuous. It will be a case of sacrifice wasted.

The attempt to bring about radical technological changes, which turned out to be so feeble, may have, all the same, dulled the impulse for marginal improvements and innovative tinkering, in some cases more appropriate to available resources and local conditions. The false dichotomy between high technology and appropriate ones accentuated.

It the strategy for modernisation is to be modified and the pace slowed down as a matter of considered policy and not just as a knee jerk reaction to the resource crunch and political compulsions, then it is necessary to have a fresh debate and a new plan strategy. For the present, however, one must face the fact that the engine of modernisation has been retarded. (Courtesy: Economic Times)

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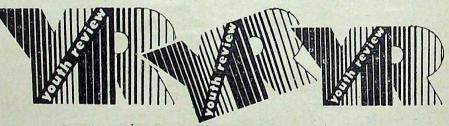
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Engineer: Nehru and Secularism

(Contd. from page 41)

Empirical reality may be influenced by the vision but is not moulded by it. It must be said to Nehru's credit that the Indian State is secular largely because of him. However, state is notional. Government which is functional is the real test of secularism. But the Government often fails in this test. Reasons for this are complex. There is manipulation of religious and caste feelings by the ruling parties on the one hand, and also popular pressures from below, on the other.

There was nothing wrong with Nehru's secular vision. It was, on the contrary, most desirable. But the emerging reality of a developing nation is far more assertive than Nehru's vision. Castes and religious communities are asserting their primordial identities far more aggressively today than in Nehru's own time. Fundamentalism has assumed menacing proportions. Some of Nehru's assumptions are being debated and even questioned.

It was assumed by Nehru that spread of science and technology and economic development would result in greater secularisation of Indian society and its polity. Assertion of fundamentalism both on the part of majority and minorities makes this assumption debatable. Not only that, the Governments both at the Centre as well as in the States, are showing signs of surrendering before the fundamentalist forces. Most of the political parties too (with the possible exception of the Left) are manipulating caste and religious sentiments more openly and blatantly than before. The political processes in India are getting more and more communalised. The recent disturbances in Andhra Pradesh were virtually a caste war between Kapus and Kammas resulting in great havoc.33

Communal disturbances are taking place with increasing ferocity and greater involvement of the State machinery. In Meerut riots³⁴ in May 1987 were ample evidence of the direct involvement of the State police and armed constatulary in the killings. These are really ominous signs. Earlier, in November 1984, there is oral evidence to the effect that some high level Congress functionaries directly incited mobs against the Sikhs.

Nehru desired that the majority should be generous towards minorities and make them feel secure. When he said this he had mainly Muslim minority in mind. However, now the Sikh problem has also emerged on the scene. Nehru spoke in the background of partition and the accompanying riots and had a point when he said that the minority should be made to feel secure. Today conditions have changed and a section of minorities is also quite assertive and aggressive producing more than matchneeds to be understood in the light of more recent developments.

No wonder then if Professor Madan strikes a pessimistic note when he writes:

South Asia as a generally shared credo of life is impossible, as a basis for state action impracticable,

and as a blueprint for the forseeable future impotent. It is impossible as a credo of life because the great majority of the people of south Asia are in their own eyes active adherents of some religious faith. It is impracticable as a basis for state action either because Buddhism and Islam have been declared state or state-protected religions or because stance of religious neutrality or equidistance is difficult to maintain since religious minorities do not share the majority's view of what this entails for the state. And it is impotent as a blueprint for the future because, by the very nature, it is incapable of countering religious fundamentalism and fanaticism." 35

The ethnic and communal conflict is intensifying not only in south Asian but also in socialist countries. Today even Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, etc. are faced with this problem in a no less acute form. Ethnic or communal conflict may be temporarily overwhelmed by forces of class struggle but it by no means disappears from the scene.

Has Nehruvian model of secularism then failed? Has it become as irrelevant as Professor Madan makes it out to be? Well, it would be difficult to give a straight answer to these questions. There is no doubt that secularism is a must for a pluralist democracy. No pluralist society can go much further without weakening parochial as well as separatist tendencies. To that extent the Nehruvian model of secularism has still not lost its relevance and it will not in the forseeable future.

Secularism has so far been understood and interpreted in the elitist sense with its anti-religion and atheistic overtones. Thus understood, it would remain an ideology of the few in the society. Nehru himself, as pointed out before, never sought to impose such an understanding of secularism on the society. However, his usual emphasis on rationality and science and technology may have created that impression. Secularism should also not mean strictly privatising and restricting religion to one's home. It goes against our socio-cultural ethos. Religion in south Asian context has always had collective sense

We can never think of secularism in India without respecting collective religious sensibilities of its people. What however one has to guard against is the politicisation of religion. It is dangerous for any society and much more for Indian society. Respecting religious sensibilities is far different from politicising religion. The real malady of Indian society today lies in its extreme polarities: there are people on one pole who accept nothing short of atheistic, even anti-religious, secularism (they are in very small minority, of course) and, on the other extreme, there are people who accept nothing short of politicised religion (they are also in minority but can often exploit religious sentiments of their respective communities).

What is needed is to avoid these extremes, respect common people's religious sensibilities and take measures to depoliticise religion (without any compromise on this). Secularism can never succeed in India) if the western model is adopted. Our social ethos are very different. It would succeed only if

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an Indian model is evolved with a creative application of the concept. Secularism may have come under serious strain in the complex process of politico-economic developments but it has not failed.

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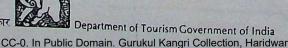
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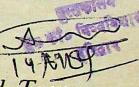
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POLITICAL NOTEBOOK



China Today and Tomorrow

FIGURES have lost all meaning in the conditions prevailing in the People's Republic of China today. The fact is that what began in the early hours of June 4, 1989 at Tiananmen Square in the heart of China's capital, Beijing, culminated in a veritable bloodbath turning the 'Square of Heavenly Peace' into one of earthly hell. Whether the number of those killed was 1400, 3000, 7000 or 10,000 is immaterial. It is pointless to ask if those wounded in indiscriminate firing add upto 10,000 or less. The stark reality is that the guardians of law and order deemed it necessary, prudent and politic to callously brand the massive and spontaneous non-violent demonstration for democracy—which has had few parallels in recent times as a show organised by "counter-revolutionaries" before mowing down countless people - young and old; men, women and children - in one of the most tragic incidents in China's history, besmirching in the process the noble ideals of socialism for which the Chinese masses endured innumerable hardships and underwent untold sacrifices in their glorious struggle for national emancipation and social regeneration.

It is futile to apportion blame at this stage. The truth is that China is experiencing a traumatic convulsion as the ruling clique clings on to power in the face of mounting waves of protest, to suppress which it has employed the most bestial methods that have earned it the epithet of "fascism" from the common citizens who were eyewitnesses to the barbaric inhumanity perpetrated at Tiananmen Square on what is now popularly described in Beijing as "Black Sunday".

On this occasion, while offering one's homage to the Tiananmen martyrs (many of whom perished singing the Internationale), one is reminded of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore, the poet laureate of India, who had expressed the anguish of his sensitive heart in the following words:

All the sorrows of the earth, its sins and crimes, its heart-breaks and its lust for violence, have swelled like a tidal wave, overleaping the banks, blaspheming the skies.

Whom do you condemn, my brother? Bow down your head -The sin is yours and mine.

(The Oarsman)

One is reminded of Bishnu Dey who wrote in similar agony:

Be afraid of the darkness no more, Cover your face with my hands ..

The intolerable light burns today by hatred; I have no taste for the foul day, Darkness alone is holy

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(With My Hands)

Digitized by Arya Samai Foundation Phandithod Bacyle's Liberation Army (PLA) lie And one is reminded of Faiz Ahmed Faiz who divided and a civil war overtakes the court

had this to say:

Look at those others instead, the ones who have freely given the shining coin of their blood in our streets. Though they have vanished all their wealth remains their own in their grave.

Look at those whose outstretched bodies adorned the cross that is truth. They are immortal, seers and prophets to this day.

(Don't Look At Them)

But whatever the trials and tribulations China is compelled to undergo, the Chinese are incorrigible optimists. And that is revealed best in the poetry of Shu Ting, the young Chinese poetess who came to India to attend an International Poetry Festival at Bhopal early this year. We know not where she is now. But her soul-stirring poems still resound in our hearts. She had written:

Suddenly the phoenix trees stop swaying, The sound of the bicycle bells is suspended And the earth rolls back To that night ten years ago.

Now the phoenix trees begin to sway again. Flower petals are ground beneath the wheels To fling their perfume through the pulsing streets The heaven-light of memory blends With the sight of you.

Perhaps nothing happened: I didn't see you at all Hallucination caused by this familiar road. But even if it did, I'm used to not shedding tears.

(Unexpected Meeting)

The pitch-darkness which has currently gripped China, we know, is the precursor of a new dawn that awaits it as the Chinese Communist Party

the aftermath of the tragedy at Tiananmen Square. Only we don't know yet the price the Chinese people would still have to pay in coins of blood to reach that dawn.

Whatever the price, it is the Shu Tings who mirror the Chinese people's boundless capacity to surmount the heavy odds that have befallen their fate. And the remarkable battle that the people of China have launched since June 4 against an insensate leadership bears testimony to that capacity while bringing into focus their grit and resolve to restore socialist principles on sound democratic foundations which several leaders of colossal stature successfully undermined with all strength at their command.

In this setting it is deplorable to find several governments, including our own, hesitant to call a spade a spade and openly denounce the slaughter in Beijing while some of our parties proudly proclaiming themselves as "Marxists" (for whose activities Marx must surely be turning in his grave) have, in effect, defended the despicable crime before which Jallianwalabagh pales into insignificance. Nevertheless, there is no gainsaying that the people of China enjoy, more than ever before, the solidarity of peace-loving democrats across the globe — both Marxists and non-Marxists, striving to build a world without war, hunger, want, destitution, exploitation and oppression, a world of genuine freedom where the mind is without fear and the head is held high.

No matter how the present Chinese leadership "celebrates" its "victory" today, tomorrow belongs

to the people of China!

As Indians nurturing the best of feelings for their Chinese brethren in their hour of trial, we are con-

vinced: come what may they will overcome! June 6

S. C.

End of Maoist Monolith

N.C.

ANARCHY has gripped China. The massacre of unarmed people by tanks and armoured carriers could not bring a semblance of order even in the capital city of Beijing. Instead, the horror of ghastly killings - estimated anywhere between 1000 to 2000 in the course of a single night - has so infuriated the citizens that spontaneous clashes with the army are reported to be continuing in Beijing. The mood in the city is one of angry defiance.

While the Indians in Beijing are safe, the ambassador, C.V. Ranganathan, has promptly advised them all to come and take shelter in the Indian embassy premises and diplomatic residences. It is learnt that troops patrolling in weapon carriers in the central part of the city are indulging in indiscriminate firing. Even the Chinese personnel in diplomatic missions have to return home early because of the great risk of being fired at.

A diplomat in Beijing told this correspondent on the phone that there was no order anywhere in Beijing today, no government offices were functioning,

N.C. has left for a study of the upheaval in China. Here are two of his despatches from Hong Kong.

presence. Transport has stopped and very few shops are open and that too only for short periods.

Reports received in Hong Kong speak of large scale confrontations in Shanghai, Nanjing, Wuhan, Changsha, Canton, Xian and Tiensin.

The authority of the government has practically collapsed. A rift within the party and also in the government is now widely known. Even the People's Liberation Army is divided. The contingent which had been sent to Beijing since the declaration of martial law to suppress the students did not agree to fire upon unarmed people, thereby nullifying the martial law order martial law order. Other contigents were, therefore, rushed in on Saturday to perpetrate a massacre ten times the size of Jallianwalabagh.

In Hong Kong eyewitness reports by daring correspondents, as also live television shots, give an idea about the idea about the magnitude of the heinous drama now being enacted in Clinical and the heinous drama

being enacted in China. To quote three out of many cases of terror killings, sterday morning. yesterday morning saw a crowd of unarmed citizens The army can enforce its authority only around responsible formation of the same and the same army are through of the public formation of the same army are the same army army are the same army army are the same army are the same army are the same army are the same army army are the same army army ar Suddenly soldiers fired upon this innocent crowd

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without warning. This horror took place in full view of foreign visitors living in the Beijing hotel. Thirty could be counted dead after just one salvo.

A wounded teacher from the foreign language institute said at a hospital that a girl in the crowd heard that her younger brother had been killed. She rushed out, even as others tried to hold her back. The soldiers opened fire and shot her seven times as she was crawling.

A doctor narrated how a four-year-old girl was killed by a bullet as she held her mother's hand, a few blocks away from Tiananmen Square.

In the British colony of Hong Kong, which is to

be turned over to China in eight years from now, the stock market tumbled heavily with shares across the board shedding 25 per cent of their value. Large queues have meanwhile formed in front of the Bank of China and all other mainland controlled banks with people withdrawing their money in protest against China's military staughter.

Hundreds of thousands of Hong Kong people from all walks of life - Chinese and non-Chinese. including Indians - marched yesterday "Down with Li Peng, Down with Deng Xiaoping". Workers, students, businessmen, traders, taxi-drivers

(Continued on page 32)

COMMENIARY

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Wages of Self-Deception

SRI LANKA President's public call for the withdrawal of the Indian Peace-Keeping Force has not come a day too soon. What President Premadasa said on June 1 was nothing to be surprised at. He wants the Indian armed forces to clear out before the second anniversary of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement of July 29, 1987.

It would be incorrect to say that President Premadasa's statement has come without any advance notice. Apart from his widely-known reservations about the 1987 Accord itself, there was little doubt about Premadasa's objection to the continued presence of the IPKF as was evident from his utterances during the presidential election campaign. When he actually got elected, the Indian authorities resorted to self-deception by wishfully thinking that once he would be saddled with the cares and responsibilities of the august office, Premadasa would be realistic enough to accept the need for retaining the IPKF.

Any careful observer, however, could have discerned long time ago that the new government at Colombo was inching towards the objective of getting the IPKF out of the island. But the high-ups in New Delhi were determined not to see the writing on the wall. And then came Colombo's decision to formally invite the LTTE leadership for serious talks

search of a settlement of the problem. At that stage, the official Indian diplomatic inter-Vention was in the form of a gentle warning that the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord must remain unchanged and that it could not be changed by any accord between the Sri Lanka Government and the LTTE in which India was excluded. There was also the demand in some India. Some Indian circles, in the proximity of the Rajiv Government, which tried to plug it hard, that under 1987 accord no solution of the Tamil problem could be arrived at without the participation of ladia On arrived at without the participation of Secreladia. On the official plane, India's Foreign Secretary visited Colombo to gently suggest to the Sri Roup which ment that the EPRLF (the Tamil group which is running the administration in the

North-East) and the others who are cooperating should not be ignored in the quest for an understanding with the LTTE. But this was promptly followed by the comment of the new Sri Lanka Foreign Minister, Ranjan Wijeratne, to the press: "Nobody need tell us how to talk with our own countrymen." It was indeed a public rebuff which India has had to swallow.

Under the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord itself, the drafting of the Indian armed forces could be at the request of the Sri Lanka President and not as one of the commitments under it. As such, it is the Sri Lanka President alone who has the unimpeded authority to demand the withdrawal of the IPKF even under the 1987 Accord. To take the plea that the life and security of the Tamil minority in the island-republic is to be made secure to New Delhi's satisfaction before the question of total withdrawal of the IPKF could be considered would amount to constricting the sovereignty of an independent neighbour. One would only wish that nobody in New Delhi would take such a view, at least not trot it out as a plea for stationing our jawans in Sri Lanka.

This new development is bound to have far-reaching repercussions on the internal politics of our country. Rajiv Gandhi who has throughout publicised the 1987 Agreement as his greatest achievement in the sphere of foreign policy, would now have to answer before the Indian public for this rather ignominious snub of having a neighbour serving the notice to quit to our Indian Army. For long, the Rajiv establishment frowned upon any suggestion that it would be wise for the Indian Army to be brought back as an aspersion on the loyalty of our jawans. There is no gainsaying the fact that our troops have suffered no inconsiderable casualty while their morale has not been in the finest of fettle, to say the least. It would, therefore, be legitimate for the Indian public to demand a sternly objective review of the Government's handling of the entire Sri Lanka crisis.

More appropriately, this has been Rajiv Gandhi's personal responsibility as he has dealt with the Sri Lanka policy since 1987 as if it is his private enterprise. Now that it seems to be ending in a confusion. if not fiasco, it would be dishonest to find a scapegoat for this setback to our foeign policy, the most serious since the 1962 Chinese armed attack.

June 2

N.C.

COMMENTARY

Beijing Massacre: Crucial Issues

BAREN RAY

fairly gruesome massacre has taken place at A Tiananmen Square in Beijing. In the long history of repressive armed actions by rulers against the populace over the ages, this was certainly not unprecedented although the figure of those killed in the early hours of Sunday was doubtless on the high side. Against that depressing and unglorious legacy of mankind, the latest event may or may not qualify as a major one on the grounds of number alone. But as a case of the most cold-blooded longprepared premeditated massive punch with heavy and advanced weapons against a large body of determined but orderly and peaceful demonstrators, it is most definitely without any precedent whatsoever.

What had been happening in Tiananmen Square for over three weeks was truly unprecedented in more than one respect. With hindsight we knownow that the Chinese Communist Party hierarchy had been divided over a range of issues beginning with the prime question of how much democracy the people were to be allowed. The first crisis had broken out more than a couple of years ago when the students' use of the 'democracy wall' had to be curbed abruptly and exemplary punishment was meted out to the famous astrophysicist Fang Lizhi (and an important member of the Party's think-tank) for encouraging that movement: a warning both to the students who had taken to action and the section of the Party leadership who held the pro-democracy

By January 1987 no less a person than Hu Yaobang, the CCP General Secretary and himself a handpicked protege of the paramount leader Deng Xiaoping, had to meet with a similar fate and bow out in disgrace for failure to restrain the unruly students. Early in 1989 the crisis within the CCP leadership came to such a height that Hu Yaobang, still in the Polit-Bureau, had a heart attack during an acrimonious debate and died shortly after in April. The crisis now went back to the students and the masses who demanded that Hu's funeral be organised with full honours and at the same time asked for his full rehabilitation. The movement which has been continuing since then took a dramatic turn when a very large and representative body of students decided to go on a mass hunger-strike at the Tiananmen Square not only in the heart of Beijing and of China as such but the venue of the most important protocol functions in connection with the then forthcoming Sino-Soviet summit,

The action began 48 hours before the Gorbachev

visit and the student occupation was so complete that the venue had to be changed. All through not only was the student mobilisation unprecedented but the mass participation of workers, intellectuals, large bodies of other civil servants (all members or followers of the Party) went on day after day with a million heads on an average in the Square. All the mass media including the official radio and television gave truthful and mostly sympathetic reports of this marathon pro-democracy movement. (An announcer on the English language service of Radio Beijing said in the morning of June 4: "Thousands of innocent civilians have been killed in a barbaric act of oppression.") What was most unique was that inspite of the declaration of Martial Law and the presence of upto 300,000 members of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) around Beijing, the students and other participants of the pro-democracy movement succeeded (evidently with the help of a section of the Party) in persuading the members of the armed forces not to embark upon armed action against the peaceful demonstrators even though the original Deng-Li Peng orders were precisely to that effect. It can be safely concluded that not only were the PLA men dissuaded from taking action but their Commanders too advised prudence, caution and a wait-and-see policy instead of a precipitate crackdown to the Party-cum-government leadership. The (Contd. on page 33)

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ARCHITECT OF ISLAMIC IRAN

The death on June 4 of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, Iran's spiritual head, removes from the world political scenario a leader who has left an imprint on contemporary affairs deeper than many or most of the Third World leaders. As a figure who guided the destiny of the Islamic revolution in Iran for the last ten years, his standing among his people based on the adulation of the last the standing at the standing and the standing are standing as the standing adulation of millions was unique indeed. As the symbol of the revolution that overthrew the pro-West regime of Reza Shah Pahlavi, the Ayatollah was single minded in his doubt. minded in his devotion to Islamic orthodoxy and inculcated that feeling among his people alongside ferocious opposition to both Washington and Moscow. But what he did achieve with Messianic zeal was the growth of an Islamic Iran on the tenets of self-reliance

The considerable bloodletting that marked his ten-year rule has been the subject of sharp criticism in various quarters (the confirmed toll of executions in Iran reached 6108 by 1985 although the Amnesty International asserts that the actual figure is much higher). And yet his facility of the confirmed tollows the confirm And yet his fearless stand against the superpowers the US in particular — imparted a distinct identity to his personality. This was best evident during the siege of the US Embassy in Teheran in November 1979. The Ayatollah was the source of the US Embassy in Teheran in November 1979. Ayatollah was the source of inspiration for the Iranians waging war against Iraq for eight long years. And it was he who happened to be the driving force behind the issue of death against Iraq for eight long years. the issue of death sentence against Salman Rushdie for

his The Satanic Verses in February 1989.

Whatever the positive and negative characteristics in his temperament, only history would be in a position to judge his contribution to the development of Iran. But that he shook the world in his crusade against superpower domination is beyond dispute. Regardless of the course Iran pursues in the days ahead, the of the course Iran pursues in the days ahead, the country will not be the same without Khomeini. Charvak.

The New Detente Triumph of Techno-Capitalism RAJNI KOTHARI

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What is happening all around us? Is the world suddenly becoming a better place to live in? More secure, less militarising, with the shadow of nuclear war receding and the arms race being contained under the impact of what may turn out to be a New Detente? Is it also going to be a more humane place to be in, more permissive of human rights and cultural plurality, more democratic internally and accommodative for diverse national aspirations externally? In effect providing a truly multilateral global order, cooperative within and across regions, keen to resolve long-standing disputes in power relations, with softening of 'hard' positions by major power centres, triggering off a chain of softening up. across the board? Building on positive tendencies within specific regions and countries while at the same time attending to major crises domestically within major countries (mainly in respect of the economy), hence producing pressures for demilitarisation for other societies as well?

Sounds too good to be true? In reality things don't quite work out that way. Human history is witness to major reversals in world affairs, at times for the better, especially after the balance of forces that govern the world have gone so off the keel and appear close to an abyss. Either some small or large step somewhere starts off a chain of happenings that keep extending into other spheres or there are simultaneous spurs from diverse spaces all of, which cumulate towards a brighter opening up of human prospects. Is something of this kind happening around us? Don't at least the announced intentions of major powers indicate some such turn in the process of history, at any rate of contemporary history, with possible consequences for the longer term too? No doubt, there are bound to be and there will be forces at work that would like this not to happen and will try to intercede accordingly. And, of course, there will be persisting counter-tendencies still at Work which will not allow the changeover to be in any way smooth or easy to accomplish. And yet doesn't one notice a whole array of happenings that have so far at any rate provided grounds of hope and expension?

and expectation of still better things happening? The more obvious symptoms are well-known: the de-escalation in the nuclear arms race heralded by the INF Treaty and the general change in attitude in the two superpowers towards defence spending and the arms race as such. But no less dramatic have been the Geneva Accords on Afghanistan, the ceasefre in the seemingly endless war between Iran and Iraq, the ltag, the new initiatives in Kampuchea, and in Angola L new initiatives in Kampuchea Namibia's Angola, heralding the journey towards Namibia's to have begun on April 1, 1989. And, of course, the

less noticed but nonetheless path-breaking steps taken in Western Sahara, Cyprus and the as yet inconclusive dialogues on Central America which, given Perez de Cueller's intense interest in sorting things out in Latin America, could produce some kind of a temporary truce on which more long-term resolutions may emerge. These by themselves add up to a major change from the climate of confrontation that existed even a year ago.

Then there are the bigger shifts. There is the qualitative and in some ways monumental change in the status of Palestine, building no doubt on the patient work of decades, the courage of various elements in the PLO, and the steady build-up of public opinion which has succeeded in isolating Israel, and yet it is a typical case of a major leap when quantity gets transformed into quality. No matter that the hawks in the US and Israel now do, there is no stopping the state of Palestine from emerging as an important actor in world politics.

There are other shifts that have a bearing on the whole kaleidoscope of world politics. The slow and tiresome meetings between the Soviet and the Chinese sides that were going on for years seem to have got transformed into a desire for resolution of outstanding issues between the Russians and the Chinese. Close on the heels of that, following Russian advice and clear gestures, the Indians and the Chinese have sought to clear up the accumulated sense of suspicion and the long-standing stalemate on the border and other issues. Similar moves are afoot between the Chinese and the Vietnamese which will no doubt contribute to the untying of one of the more knotty carryovers of the long colonial era of conflicts in the Vietnamese peninsula, namely the crisis in Kampuchea which has involved historically unprecedented genocide of the most inhuman and ghastly kind.

And cutting across all these possibilities of relaxation in inter-state tensions may be gains on broader parameters -, a generalised preference for economic welfare of the people over the military power of the state, a widely shared consensus on the democratic process as a way of organising governance, a broader acceptance of human rights, a spirit of tolerance towards cultural pluralism, extendable at least in theory to even the questions of nationality and ethnic identity. Already there had taken place some welcome developments in certain regions - the 'redemocratisation' in major countries like Brazil Argentina and later in the Philippines, the democratic revolution in Nicaragua in the face of powerful hostile forces and yet with a distinctive institutional model of democracy that included liberal freedoms, the dramatic changeover in Pakis-

MAINSTREAM June 10, 1989

tan, the powerful upswing of democratic resistance in Burma and Korea, much of this a result of domestic

struggles but all having a bearing on the regional

and global thresholds of the states system. Such a combination of de-escalation in states of tension and violence in the international arena and prospects for the democratisation of the state internally - and both of these generating public opinion across the board in favour of both peace and democracy - may set the stage when it may even become possible to deal with some of the more difficult and obstinate issues that have led to an accentuation of structural dualism which characterises the present 'world order'. The most important among these are the debt crisis on the one hand and the escalating arms trade that is preventing the promise of disarmament to widen beyond the nuclear club on the other. The latter in particular is also fuelling the militarisation of civil societies, permitting ethnocide against cultural minorities and nationalities within nation-states, and propping up regimes of repression in which armed might is being employed against dissident groups and movements for civil rights. It is being argued by some that relxation of tensions internationally and the changing attitude to issues like human rights may permit gradual improvement on these matters too. Perhaps this may be too much to expect, most of the optimists would agree, but as there seems to have been a close tie-up between various issues like superpower rivalry and the nuclear arms race, the North-South divide, support to authoritarian regimes, regional confrontations and escalating sales of armaments and collaborations in arms manufacturing capacities, it may not be too far-fetched to expect that once reversals in some of these take place they could well extend to the whole gamut of issues.

What precisely will be the emerging scenario of world affairs in respect of most if not all of these issues and - this is crucial - their interrelationships is by no means certain. We have yet to come to grips with what in fact is taking shape right before our eyes. All one can do is to delineate new trends (and identify the reasons behind them), raise certain issues that these trends throw up, suggest doubts and apprehensions in respect of possible outcomes, and in the light of all this, think of new interventions that could at once build on positive tendencies and prevent both negative outcomes thereof and the persistence of counter-tendencies that continue to create impediments in the way of realising a more humane and just future. These are matters not just of theoretical conjecture or even of a carefully studied set of analyses but also of intellectual inputs for policy alternatives that should be considered by world statesmen, the diplomatic community, the United Nations system and above all that slowly emerging group of quiet influentials, the 'concerned citizens' representing various social movements and "voices of the people" which in a variety of ways have been impinging on both domestic and

world affairs.

The influence of the latter may appear less visible and direct but is in a variety of ways basic and could contribute to major historical shifts, not just in the

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennal and a Sangerropinions that perform longer term catalytic roles but also in unravelling and highlighting hitherto suppressed facts and realities that had been defined out of existence by forces interested in preserving the statu quo and keeping conflicts and confrontations alive for perpetuating the same. The peace movement in Europe, for example, has not only stirred the conscience of large sections of the people, including the privileged strata of the middle classes, but has also, through patient research and advocacy, exposed the horrible economic and ecological costs of the arms race and laid bare the depressing consequences thereof for employment, economic viability of regimes, fulfilment of minimum consumer needs of people in countries spending so much on armaments, not to speak of the balance of payment difficulties facing major governments and the startling effects of all these on the stability of currencies, interest rates and the extension of the debt trap to what used to be buoyant and self-reliant economies at one time.

Likewise, the ecology, women's and human rights movements have not just raised important ethical issues on behalf of the deprived strata of the people, the coming generations, women and tribal populations but have also contributed to national and international debates on the consequences of prevailing models of development, national security and the like which have succeeded in creating a body of informed opinion that has over time led to changed perceptions of the reality among sections of the ruling elites. And this has not been limited to countries in which these movements have had large media impacts. Thus for a long time it was thought that the peace movement was an anathema to the Yet in some Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. ways the impact has been the greatest in that part of

the world. There is also growing admission of "the common environment danger" arising out of "the state of earth's resources" and "the crying social problem of the developing world" in the same Gorbachev thesis that propounded the logic of de-escalating the arms race. But more than the growing acceptance of these more obvious dangers, the more basic contribution of the various social movements, particularly as some of their leaders have been moving out of their single-constituency foci and realising the interrelationship between dimensions, is to contribute to a deeper theoretical grasp of the human condition and to force public attention on linkages and interconnections that are likely to escape demands for "adjustment" and "accommodations" that merely pragmatic and short-range understanding is likely to produce.

It is with respect to the inter-relationships that are likely to be ignored or left out of consideration and the consequences of focussing on single dimensions or limited concerns that I want to raise certain issues, pose doubts and apprehensions that arise in my mind and apprehensions arise in my mind, and suggest, both for the move ments and for the community of experts concerned with public policy. with public policy, possible interventions that are sensitive to the interventions that are sensitive to the inter-relationships and are capable of safeguarding the inter-relationships and are capable to safeguarding the inter-relationships and are capable to

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THERE is no doubt that it has finally dawned on the erstwhile perpetrators of the war system and the academic justifiers of the same that they had gone too far and had ignored the consequences of their thinking for the performance and therefore for the survival and stability of their respective systems. As already mentioned, this is in part an impact of the peace movement and the growing public criticism (including from earlier advocates and defendants the Cold War) but also a consequence exposing the sheer madness of the ruling doctrines of national security based on the theory of deterrence and on the assumption that peace was to be secured by preparing for war. We have already been told about the reassessment that has taken place on the Soviet side, spurred in particular by the economic consequences for the USSR of the continually escalating arms race (both nuclear and conventional). There is evidence of a similar reconsideration on the side of the Western allies, in particular the United States, which has been reeling under the quite considerable economic costs of maintaining large defence expenditures, in particular the frightening growth of both the budget deficit and international debt, the decline in value of the dollar vis-a-vis the other major currencies and the sharp competition offered by the new economic giants like Japan and the EEC.

Following the growing criticisms on these lines, there are emerging signs of slow rethinking on economic ideology based on supply side economics, liberalisation and privatisation, dismantling of the Welfare State and the discrediting of the positive role of the state in meeting the basic human needs and maintaining minimum levels of order and justice in society - in short, a slow rethinking on the claims and presumed virtues of the latest phase of world capitalism fuelled by high technology and its global

Thirdly, there has also taken place some realisation of the limits of realpolitik — the slow realisation among the Leninists and the Maoists about the limits of the conflictual model of world politics and a simultaneous, though slower, realisation among Policy-makers in the US about the limits of the confrontational posture of US imperialism. There bluenrich be a retreat on both sides from the neat blueprints of global hegemony to be achieved through superpower confrontation and a strategy of drawing various regional, client states into that confrontational model.

All these shifts represent no more than a pragmatic reese shifts represent no more reassessment of continuing with the war system eassessment of continuing with the war Visiem and is not yet based on any fundamental ideological or normative rethinking on basic arrangements. As the fuller hents and institutional structures. As the fuller import of the world crisis has not been properly not only partial and unsatisfactory but on certain dimensions, counter-productive. It is to this gap between something truly positive happening and its failure to measure up as fully as the situation is demanding that I shall now turn.

We still continue to live in a world in large parts of which the state is conceived as a coercive apparatus and is weighing down on large sections of the people, not infrequently in close collaboration with (and often led by) interests emanating from transnational capitalism and its technocratic logic. Increasingly, in many parts of the world, security is conceived not just through the corrosive idea of a national security state but the far more oppressive conception which limits security to the security of elites and the ruling coteries, marshalling for that purpose, military and para-military forces. There continues to be in operation a thriving arms bazaar, producing both for the security of narrow elites against their populations and for maintaining regimes of regional hegemony and brutalised control, alongside of course the still continuing and ever more sophisticated weapons technologies which are then fed to maintain the tempo of militarisation within and across nation-states, not to mention the still persisting interest (all the way from the universities to the computer conglomerates) in adventures like the SDI.

Nor has there been any great change in the persisting hold of transnational techno-capitalism, the growing power of transnational financial superstructure (the World Bank, the IMF, the large commercial money markets) or the growing hold domestically of the techno-managers who are everywhere replacing institutional structures of representative and bureaucratic types based on minimum norms of accountability, participation and recipro-There is, if anything, growing highhandedness and repression on the part of ruling elites in their approach to grassroots movements aimed at radical reconstruction of governance and of the state.

The poor are everywhere getting marginalised and so are the women, the ethnics, the forest people and above all the indigenous cultures keen on preserving their identity, their eco-systems and their ancestral meaning systems. In fact, there are reasons to think that each of these tendencies may get accentuated in an era of accommodation between major powers and within the states systems as a whole which is likely to ask for greater integration of states and economies and cultural orders as well as alternative scientific and technological models - into one large integrated (interdependent?) 'world order'. For all the democratic and human rights euphoria presently being witnessed from the spokesmen of governments, there still persists a basic fear of the people and their diverse cultural, ecological and ethnic assertions. It is a fear that may even grow as the new climate of de-escalation and the new language of accommodation at the global level spurs the various grassroots movements towards a greater surge forward, particularly of the hitherto socially and economi· community.

THERE seems to be no guarantee that moderation inter-state and inter-governmental following a decline in the politics of confrontation at that level, will necessarily produce a greater commitment to equity, social diversity and ecological sustainability or of real compassion and care for the downtrodden. Similarly there is little guarantee against the persistence of ill-advised projects of industrialisation based on hazardous technologies, producing not just more Chernobyls and Bhopals (we very nearly escaped one more during the earthquake in Armenia) but the less noticed and, in their total effect, more pernicious consequences of the leaks and explosions caused by nuclear and other devices used for so called 'peaceful purposes'. Again in fact there is reason to suspect that as the slogan 'disarmament to development' catches on and as there is more and more uncritical acceptance of the Western model of economic development, many of these features of technological catching up may in fact grow. Indeed, one result of both glasnost and perestroika could well be a decline in criticism of the exploitative models of capitalism based on mounting extraction of strategic raw materials and natural resources.

Two important quotes, one from the main thesis of the Report of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the Great October Revolution, and the other from Perestroika, will be

in order at this stage.

"For all the profound contradictions of the contemporary world, for all the radical differences among the countries that comprise it, it is inter-related, interdependent and integral. The reasons for this include the internationalisation of world economic ties, the comprehensive scope of the scientific and technological revolution, the essentially novel role played by the mass media, the state of earth's resources, the common environment danger, and the crying social problems of the developing world which affects us all. The main reason, however, is the problem of human survival."2

"We know how important the Middle East, Asia, Latin America, the other Third World regions and also South Africa are for American and European economies, in particular as raw material sources. To cut these links is the last, thing we want to do, and we have no desire to provoke ruptures in historically formed, mutual economic interests".3

Much will depend on the strength of conviction in the larger vision for global transformation that informs the democratic movement worldwide, particularly in its ability to comprehend the basic interrelationship between different dimensions of social change and the new set of contradictions that are arising following the latest strategic shifts in interstate relations. It will also depend on the ability of

cally deprived and oppressed stratege by the human these movements to affect global power structures and the land oppressed stratege by the human these movements to affect global power structures and the land oppressed stratege by the human these movements to affect global power structures and the land oppressed stratege and make the land oppressed stratege and make the land oppressed stratege and make the land oppressed stratege and make the land oppressed stratege and make the land oppressed stratege and the land oppressed stratege and oppress the US, Japan and Western Europe and major countries (like China and India) that are being drawn into their vortex. There will also be need for the theory of revolution based on earlier conceptions to come to grips with the new reality in which it is quite openly being advocated that working class interests have to be subjugated to 'common human 'values' and that this constitutes the "core of the new political thinking". Similarly, earlier conceptions of nation-building, 'development' and social change will need to deal with the possible response of the world status quo to the new challenge posed by visionaries like Gorbachev and others. To assume that just because the overall statement includes, alongside demilitarisation, issues of human rights, environment and "the crying social problems of the developing world" does not ensure that this will all be achieved in the same measure or even in small measures, or that new contradictions between these diverse goals will not arise.

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Alongside the social implications of the New Reconciliation in the states system attempted at the apex thereof, there is another set of issues that will need to be confronted both by statesmen and by leaders of various movements. First, how will countries and economies that have benefited from the war system and arms trade on the one hand and the new model of techno-capitalism linked with military high-tech and computer science on the other respond to the new initiatives and the new stance towards the arms race? It is crucial not to overlook the fact that the newest version of industrial capitalism, especially in the United States but also in countries like France and Germany (and to some extent Japan), had been heavily linked to the R & D generated by the latest phase in the militarisation and control of the outer space. Secondly, how will the developing countries that were also benefiting from such a model of high capitalism (especially the NICs and aspirant NICs like India and China) respond to the

The first issue raises the whole question of the emerging split within the North between the two superpowers who have had to pay much of the cost of keeping the arms race going and whose popula-tion and economy seem to have borne much of the brunt of the same and other industrial 'giants' who have reaped considerable economic advantages from the arms race (as also within the US between the hawkish beneficiaries of the SDI and the Pentagon on the one hand and the State Department and the US Congress on the other). The second issue high lights the emerging split within the Third World keen on getting integrated into the world market and those left out of such an integrated model and made to stew in the to 'stew in their own juices' as will, for instance, be the case with large both, the case with large parts of Africa. Underlying both of course lies of Africa. of course, lies the major contemporary shift of techno-capitalism from the Atlantic to the east of the Pacific, the latter in Pacific, the latter in some ways posing a far more ruthless and ruthless and amoral conception of state power, technology and technology and social control than was the case (Contd. on page 34)

Sino-Soviet Summit & India

V.V. PARANJPE

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THE historic importance of Gorbachev's visit to China last month needs no elaboration. The visit marks the beginning of a new relationship in the communist world based not purely on ideology or internationalism but on national interests with the five principles of peaceful coexistence being extended to state and party relations as well.

With the communist monolith shattered and the communist dream withering away, the two Communist giants had undoubtedly much to ruminate about in private. They could ruefully reminisce about Stalin and Mao who had built and then destroyed

communism by their atrocious behaviour.

Gorbachev had himself presided over the liquidation of the Stalinist model and his visit to China signified acceptance of the new realities of polycentrism and national aspirations which in turn meant possible national rivalries, spheres of influence and differences and discords as in the rest of the

Gorbachev's China visit, coming as it did after three decades of bitter hostility, inevitably brings back to mind the visit paid by the Indian Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi, to the same country, China, in similar circumstances and for a similar purpose only five months ago in December 1988. Comparisons are invidious but often instructive. No two visits could be more different in content, impact or achievement and the treatment they received at the hands of the Chinese. While the Gorbachev visit has become a milestone in history, the other visit has virtually vanished into oblivion. Gorbachev lew into Beijing to receive a hero's welcome, while other VIPs had to remain content with a cool-butcorrect protocol reception; and Chinese receptions are a barometer of the importance they attach to a visit.

China had a reason to extend a very warm welcome to Gorbachev not only because he was a kindred spirit advocating similar philosophies of perestroika and glasnost, but more importantly he had brought with him not only a bouquet of elegant words full of pious intentions and lofty sentiment,

but a few concrete gestures of friendship.

Both Gorbachev and Rajiv Gandhi went to China for a common objective, that is, to normalise relaon with China. This centred, to a large measure, on a settlement of the border dispute which had bedevilled their relations. While the Indian Prime Minister either skirted or evaded the real issue and Gorback Concentrated only on the publicity aspect, Gorbachev took a bold and farsighted decision to meet the Chinese half way and offered China concrete concessions:

(a) he more or less acceded to the Chinese

The author is a former diplomat and wellknown specialist on China studies.

demand for withdrawal of Soviet military presence from Chinese borders, Mongolia, Afghanistan and even Vietnam (partly because it also fitted in with his programme to shrink Soviet military commitments abroad and concentrate on internal development);

(b) he accepted the mid-stream principle thereby returning to China not only Chen Pao (or Damansky) island (over which China had fought a bloody battle) but also more than 300 other

islands.

He did not talk of friendship, he showed it. And action speaks louder than words.

Gorbachev achieved full normalisation of relations but in it the Chinese also seem to have played

an important role.

Settlement of the Sino-Soviet border question was a very great problem for China and the way they handled it may provide an insight into the Chinese way of doing things and perhaps hold a lesson for us to imbibe.

Interestingly enough, China's perception of the two border disputes (Sino-Soviet and Sino-Indian) and her treatment of them present some striking

similarities:

(i) China regarded both disputes as a legacy of the past — when imperialist powers (Czarist Russia or Britain) taking advantage of China's weakness, forced or tried to force China into signing 'unequal' treaties and cede large tracts of

(ii) But China was not in a hurry to solve these disputes unless external events made it necessary to do so. China treated them as issues' to be settled when the 'time was ripe'. Thus in both cases China kept silent for nearly a decade. With the Sino-Soviet rift in 1959. China raised the issue and flung it at the Russians. Till then China did not want to disturb the Soviet Union which was giving her massive assistance.

In the case of India, China for a long time evaded the issue on the plea that she was merely reproducing old KMT maps and had not studied the problem. But with Dalai Lama's exit to

India in 1959, the issue became 'ripe'.

(iii) China regarded both the disputes not as merely territorial disputes (as India and perhaps the Soviet Union too were inclined to do) but as a geo-political issue to be used for political ends. (iv) In both cases, China resorted to the force of arms not so much to seek a militay solution of the problem as to express her anger and frustration and bring the other side to the negotiating table. Thus in 1962, Chinese armies came into the NEFA but withdrew without occupying it.

(v) China seemed to regard the disputes not so much a disease in itself as a symptom of a

malaise.

(vi) In both cases it would appear, China took the initiative to start a dialogue.

In the Soviet dispute, little progress was possible during the Mao-Brezhnev era. But as soon as (Continued on page 12)

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MAINSTREAM June 10, 1989

GORBACHEV VISIT TO CHINA

A View from India

INDER MALHOTRA

By any reckoning, the reconciliation between the Soviet Union and China, brought about during Mikhail Gorbachev's historic visit to Beijing, is a world event of the first magnitude. Its profound significance for not only the two countries but also the rest of humanity cannot be overshadowed even by the tremendous tumult within China. India's interest and stake in it, as a neighbour of both the Communist giants, cannot be overstated.

Nor should there be any doubt that the Sino-Soviet rapprochement would not be paralysed even temporarily, no matter what course the present struggle within China takes. China's internal affairs are not under discussion here. Suffice it to say that both the sides in the current contention have equal interest in strengthening friendly relations with the

Soviet Union.

Demonstrators in Tiananmen Square and elsewhere, and such supporters as they may have within the Chinese leadership, are clamouring for precisely what Gorbachev has become a symbol of. He is therefore their valued ally. Those Chinese leaders who have evidently prevailed, for the present at least, and apparently want to go slow on glasnost even while sticking to perestroika desperately need peace and quiet on the frontier with the USSR, if only because the People's Liberation Army (PLA) has its hands full maintaining internal order. Unlike this country, China does not have effective paramilitary organisations to serve the purpose that the BSF and the CRPF do here.

There is another important element that underpins the restored friendship between the once bitterly estranged comrades. No matter how different the pace of political reforms in the two countries, these are bound to interact more than considerably. That is where the two countries' commitment, in their joint communique, to exchanging "information and experience in the field of building socialism, restructuring and reform, as well as opinions on issues of mutual interest" comes in, "Disagreements on these or other matters," adds the communique, "should not prevent the development of relations between the two states."

It is noteworthy that during his stay in the Chinese capital, the Soviet leader made a specific and friendly reference to India. He also spoke warmly of the Delhi Declaration he had signed with Rajiv Gandhi

The author, a veteran journalist who edited major national dailies, is one of our leading columnists. This article is based on his opening contribution to a discussion organised by the Krishna Menon Society at the Nehru Memorial Museum, Teen Murti House, New Delhi on May 28, 1989.

two and a half years ago, from which comes the inspiring concept of the World Without Violence. In November last, on a visit to New Delhi to receive the Indira Gandhi award for international understanding, Gorbachev had made a similar friendly reference to the People's Republic of China. The pith and substance of his remarks on both the occasions was that "good relations" between the Soviet Union, India and China were "extremely important for the destinies of Asia and for global progress".

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The vision of friendly relations between India. China and the Soviet Union is not new. It has fascinated the Indian mind since the twenties. In all his writings in the thirties and early forties, Jawaharlal Nehru envisaged friendship and cooperation between India and China as the bedrock of Asian resurgence. He also spoke of a great many things India and the Soviet Union could do together. After independence, he made friendship between India, the Soviet Union and China an integral part of his policy. The resemblance between what he said in the fifties and what Gorbachev is now trying to popularise with admirable skill and stamina is striking.

The key question is: whether what unfortunately could not work in the past would do so in future?

And, if so, how far and how fast?

Rather than rush in with definitive answers to this question, let me briefly outline a broad scenario, indicate some crucial factors which are bound to influence the shape of things to come and raise a few

Old habits die hard, and old habits of thinking die even harder. Time was, not long ago, when any Indian attempt to start a dialogue with China used to cause in Moscow something akin to alarm. In reverse, many Indians started getting worried in recent years when it became apparent that the Soviet-China dia logue, starting after the India-China one did, was proceeding faster and progressing farther.

It is all the more remarkable therefore that the Sino-Soviet entente has not evoked any howl of alarm or protest in any quarter in India. This is a measure not only of growing self-confidence in this country but also of a vast change in the international environment which owes itself largely to Gorbachev's bold, dramatic and often unilateral initiatives. India's views of the changing nature of the Sino-Soviet relations has also varied.

To say this is not to deny that not everybody believes the claim, iterated in the joint communique issued in Beijing, that improvement in relations between Russia ween Russia and China was not directed against third countries and would not affect the interests of third countries. third countries. Such statements are treated as the inevitable does inevitable dose of anodyne in diplomatic documents.

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Furthermore, not all observers of the scene are clear- across the Atlantic. The mind-boggling Japanese eyed; perceptions of many continue to be crouded by trade surplus should not obscure the fantastic ecopre-conceived notions.

For instance, amidst the limited reaction to the outcome of the Beijing summit in this country, two schools of thought, diametrically opposed to each

other, have come to the surface.

The first blandly assumes that the balance of forces has changed to India's disadvantage because, in deference to China's wishes, the Soviet Union would "dilute" its time-tested friendship with India; that it would also improve its relations with Pakistan (though only after the Afghanistan problem is out of the way); and that, at the same time, China's commitment to Pakistan would remain unimpaired.

The second view takes it for granted that nothing whatever would change in the Soviet Union's political, economic and strategic support to this country and that, on the other hand, China's interest in bolstering Pakistan (and other neighbours of India in the SAARC region) would diminish almost to

vanishing point.

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Both these extreme views, one born of paranoia and the other of wishful thinking, are equally untenable. The complex reality lies somewhere between the two. It combines a great deal of change with a lot of continuity. What precisely the admixture of change and continuity would be will depend on a host of factors not least of which would be the skill with which India handles its relations with not only the Soviet Union and China but also all others, including Japan, ASEAN (where the configuration of forces and policies is bound to change with the resolution of the Kampuchean issue), the States, Western Europe (where tremendous changes are taking place and the NATO is in trouble on the eve of its fortieth anniversary) and our immediate neighbours.

The thing to remember is that all major international relations are in a state of flux and every actor worth the name is trying hard to attain maximum flexibility in its relations with all others. There 18 no reason why India should not pursue the same

course.

Let me now list some of the favourable factors that might facilitate the kind of quest we ought to

First, the bipolar world which had dominated our lives and thinking for so long has ended. The age of multipolarity, that is to say, of a number of

independent centres of power has dawned. Confrontation and the cold war, the two hallmarks of the era now mercifully ending, have yielded place to the emerging new detente within which the rapid transition in multiple relations is taking

Secondly, the economic and technological power has not overridden military might. Nor can it do so. But the cutting edge of the power of technology and economic development is being felt all over. The Painful problems that the United States is having With Japan speak for themselves.

It is the burgeoning economic might of the Pacific tim that has made it the focus of international attention. Me Pacific than More trade now flows across the Pacific than

nomic performance of Taiwan and Korea.

Thirdly, in view of the foregoing, it should not be a surprise that while wanting to widen the new detente globally, Gorbachev has given primacy to the Asia-Pacific region where all the principal actors in the world drama except the European Economic Community are physically present and remarkably active.

THIS brings me to the fourth and perhaps the most important element of hope in the situation.

spelling out his initiative for promoting stability and security in the Asia-Pacific region in his famous Vladivostok speech in July 1986, Gorbachev went out of his way to stress that he was not seeking to undermine American influence in the region but was seeking the cooperation of the USA. He appears to have lived up to his words for even the sceptics seem convinced that he is approaching the issue of security in the Pacific on the basis of .cooperation, interdependence and multipolarity.

The point can be best illustrated by the Japan-China relations. For nearly four decades it was a basic objective of the Soviet Union's Pacific policy to somehow break or subvert the US-Japan security relationship and insist on Japanese neutrality. Even today Japan has a serious territorial problem with the Soviet Union. But no Japanese is any longer worried about Russia's intentions about Japan's security relationship with the Americans. Indeed, Russia now seeks a better relationship with Japan within the broad framework of the Japan-US security network. How is this different from a more independent role of Japan within the existing security framework that many Japanese themselves are advocating?

In other words, basic strategic equations can endure but in a way that tensions are lessened. stability and security promoted and the milieu

becomes non-antagonistic.

What is feasible, indeed likely, in East Asia should also be possible in South Asia. Or, at least,

we should endeavour to make it possible.

This task is made easier by the fact that Gorbachev and his Chinese hosts have not tried to revive the kind of alliance the two sides had during the fifties. This makes sound sense. Why try and forge new alliances when the old ones look like falling apart?

Even at the risk of stressing the obvious it must also be pointed out that the Sino-Soviet reconciliation has taken place at a time when India-China relations are also improving. This improvement is slow.

But things are moving in the right direction.

It should be our endeavour to accelerate the pace of improvement in the relationship between the world's two most populous nations. Let us explore seriously what we can do. Let us suggest to our Chinese friends what they might consider doing.

If it is imperative for China to have peace and quiet on its northern frontier with the Soviet Union. it stands to reason that tranquillity along the India-China border in the south would also be desirable of the troubled situation in Tibet.

Of course, a complete absence of tension along the border is equally in India's interest. Both India and China are indeed committed to this, in terms of the joint communique issued at the end of Rajiv Gandhi's visit to China in December.

Is it possible to use this shared interest to hasten the quest for a just and fair solution of the vexed boundary issue between our two countries through

friendly negotiations?

The Sino-Soviet communique has referred to the boundary dispute between those two countries. The communique states that the eastern and western sectors of this boundary should be settled together. This is very interesting. For, while the eastern, riverine sector is as good as settled after Gorbachev's acceptance, in the course of his Vladivostok speech, of the Thalweg principle, the boundary in the Pamirs is a different matter altogether. Here arise all the questions, such as the watershed principle, which apply also to the India-China frontier.

The principles governing the settlement of the Soviet-China boundary, outlined in the Beijing communique, need to be studied carefully in the hope that they might be of some help also to the Indian

and Chinese negotiators.

Of late the technological and economic dimension of international, diplomacy has taken a big leap. There are two elements in this. On the one hand, almost all countries are looking for high technology — available in some cases, only from the United States and Japan — which is becoming both increasingly scarce and subject to rigorous restrictions on its transfer and export. On the other, the most powerful countries are becoming more protectionist as well as something of a bully.

India, Brazil and Japan have been placed on the US economic "hit list". Not only were all kinds of pressures put on India to prevent the Agni from being test-fired but the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) is even more draconian than the regulations of the London Club of nuclear exporters. The fuss being made about trade-related intellectual property rights is there for all to see. This situation is complex. But it provides all concerned, especially those who are opposed to a global technological monopoly, both opportunities and challenges.

Finally, a brief word about non-alignment. Regrettably, the non-aligned movement (NAM) did not find a mention in the Beijing communique though the document does refer to the worsening economic situation of the developing countries, the "growing gap" between the North and the South and the

acute foreign debt problem"

Moreover, it is becoming fashionable in certain. quarters these days to pronounce the NAM as outdated and irrelevant. The growing new detente is only one of the reasons cited in support of this demolition job. It is also argued that the NAM has miserably failed to settle disputes among its own members, that many NAM members flout the movement's principles in any case and that leading nonaligned countries, such as Algeria, Yugoslavia and perhaps India, are in bad shape.

This defeatist and distorted logic is rather strange, from the Chinese point of view pignized by Arya Samaj Foundation Qualinabetweenhythe North and the South is widening and the goal of a new and just international econiomic order is receding rather than coming nearer, there is every reason to rejuvenate the NAM, not to disband or allow it to lapse into desuetude.

All through its existence the movement has sunported the UN. It was most unhappy during the long years when the world body was utterly ineffectual. It has welcomed the UN's impressive revival But it has also witnessed with dismay that the Big Five have tended to show a proclivity to lay down the law. The baneful consequences of supremacy of the Big Five, acting with unanimity, are already visible in Namibia where the strength of the UN peace keeping force was dangerously reduced.

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If for nothing else, a vigorous non-aligned movement is needed simply to struggle for democratisation of the UN power structure. Gorbachev made the excellent suggestion that the NAM chairman should automatically be a member of the UN Security Council though he has shied away from conceding to the spokesman of 104 nations the rights which the delegates of the five permanent members

Let me conclude by suggesting that, as a first step towards the desired goal of triangular cooperation, India, the Soviet Union and China should formally sponsor Gorbachev's proposal at Turtle Bay.

Paranjpe: Summit and India (Contd. from page 9)

that era had ended, China secretly sent a senior official to Moscow in 1981 to signal China's

willingness to settle.

In the case of India, China tried not once but thrice, to start a dialogue for a peaceful settlement of the border. First, in 1960 when Chinese Prime Minister Zhou En-lai himself flew to Delhi; in 1972 when Mao enquired as to how long we were going to continue the quarrel; and in 1979 when Deng Xiao-ping mooted the idea of a 'package deal'. But all this fell on deaf ears (vii) In the Sino-Soviet dispute, faced with a mighty adversary like the Soviet Union, the Chinese, who are perhaps the oldest practitioners of the art of politics seem to have followed the famous maxim that 'politics is the art of the possible' and refrained from asking the impossible. They made it clear that they were not necessarily insisting on the return of all territories occupied by Russia but they attached political conditions seeking vacation of Soviet armed presence and military threat from China's peripheral areas.

The Soviet Union found it convenient to accept

and the deal was done.

The Sino-Soviet summit was thus a victory for realism, common sense and the spirit of give-and-

It also showed that national interests are better served by ending a potentially dangerous stalemate than by perpetuating it.

(Courtesy: The Times of India)

Economic Development and Environmental Conflicts

JAYANTA BANDYOPADHYAY and VANDANA SHIVA

A characteristic of the Indian civilisation has been its sensitivity to the natural ecosystems. Vital renewable natural resources like vegetation, soil, water, etc., were managed and utilised according to well defined social norms that respected the known ecological processes. The indigenous modes of natural resources utilisation were sensitive to the limits to which these resources could be used. It is said for instance that the codes of visiting the important pilgrim centres, like Badrinath in the sensitive Himalayan ecosystem, included a maximum stay of one night so that the temple area would not put excess pressure on the local natural resources base.

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A major change in the utilisation of natural resources of India came with the British, who linked the resources of this country with the direct and largescale non-local demands of western Europe. Natural resource utilisation, by the East India Company, and later by the colonial rulers, replaced the indigenous organisations for the utilisation of natural resources that were mainly managed as commons.

The ever increasing resource demands of the industrial revolution in England were largely met from colonies like India. Forced cultivation of indigo in Bengal and Bihar, growth of cotton in Gujarat and the Deccan led to largescale commitment of land for the supply of raw materials for the British industry. Forests in the sensitive mountain ecosystems like the Western Ghats or the Himalaya were felled to build battleships or meet the requirements of the expanding railway network. The colonial intervention led to conflicts over vital renewable natural resources like water or forest and induced new forms of poverty and deprivation. Changes in resource endowments and entitlements introduced by the British came in conflict with the local people's age-old rights and practices related to natural resource utilisation.

As a result local responses got generated through which people tried to regain and retain control over local natural resources. The Indigo movement in eastern India, the Deccan movement for land rights or forest movement in all forest areas of the country, the Western Ghats, the central Indian hills or the Himalaya, were the obvious expressions of protest generated by these newly created conflicts.

The conflicts resulting from the colonial modes of natural resource exploitation could not, however, with a local identity. Rightly, with the advance-

ment of anti-colonial people's movement at the national level, these local protests merged with the national struggle for independence. With the collapse of the colonial rule and the appearance of sovereign independent countries in the Third World resolution of these conflicts at the local level became a possibility. While the political independence vested the control over natural resources with the Indian state, the colonial institutional framework for natural resource management did not change in essence. Where colonialism ended, the slogan of economic development stepped in. There was no other institutional mechanism than those of the classical model left by the British, with which the newly formed Indian national could respond to the accentuated aspirations of the Indian people for a better life. The same institutions and concepts, nurtured and developed by the colonial rulers were put to objectives which were the opposite to those of the colonial period. Concepts and categories about economic development and natural resource utilisation that had emerged in the specific context of capitalist growth and industrialisation at the centers of colonial power were raised to the level of universal assumptions and appplicability. The processes which resulted in the deprivation were now supposed to satisfy basic needs. It was forgotten that the specificity of early industrial development in western Europe necessitated the occupation of the colonies and the undermining of the local 'natural economy'. This inexorable logic of resource exploitation, exhaustion and alienation integral to the classical model of economic development based on resource intensive technologies led Gandhi to seek an alternate path of development for India when he wrote:

God forbid that India should ever take to industrialism after the manner of the West. The economic imperialism of a single tiny island kingdom (England) is today keeping the world in chains. If an entire nation of 300 million took to similar economic exploitation, it would strip the world bare like locusts.

While Gandhi's critique was an advance warning against the future problems of following the classical path of resource intensive development, at the time of India's independence, there was no clear and comprehensive work-plan to realise the Gandhian dreams of alternative development, that would be resource prudent and satisfy basic needs. The issues of resource constraints were, therefore, not highlighted at the theoretical level, partly due to the tremendous pressure of the enhanced aspirations of a newly independent nation, and partly due to the lack of internalisation of natural resource parameters within the framework of economics. As the scale of economic development activities escalated from one five-year plan to another, the disruption of the ecological processes that maintain the productivity of the natural resource base started becom-

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The authors who are crusading environmentalists represent the Research Foundation for Science and Ecology, Dehra Dun. Dr Vandana Shiva is the Director of the Foundation. This contribution is taken from IFDA Dossier 71 (May-June 1989).

ing more and more apparent. The classical model of economic development in the case of the newly independent nations resulted in the growth of urbanindustrial enclaves where commodity production was concentrated, as well as of quick exhaustion of the internal colonies whose resources supported the enhanced demands of these enclaves.

In the absence of ecologically enlightened resource management methods, the pressure of poverty enhanced the pace of economic development activities with the hope of a quick improvement in the standard of living for all, as in western Europe. For example, commercial forestry made more revenues by making more timber and pulpwood available in the market but in the process reduced the multipurpose biomass productivity or damaged the hydrology of the forests. People dependent on non-timber biomass outputs of the forest, like leaves, twigs, fruits, nuts, medicines, oils, etc., were unable to sustain themselves, in the face of commercial exploitation of forests. The changed hydrological character of the forests affected both the micro-climate and the stream flows disturbing the hydrological stability and affecting agricultural production.

Ecological degradation and economic deprivation generated by the resource insensitivity and intensity of the classical model of development have resulted in environmental conflicts, whose understanding is necessary for the reorientation of development pri-

orities and concepts.

The ecology movements that have emerged as major social movements in many parts of India are making visible many invisible externalities and pressing for their internalisation in the economic evaluation of the elite-oriented development process. In the context of a limited resource base and unlimited aspirations, the ecology movements have initiated a new political struggle for safe-guarding the interest and survival of the poor, the marginalised, among whom are women, tribals and the poor peasants.

Ecology Movements and Survival

The intensity and range of the ecology movements in independent India have kept on increasing as predatory exploitation of natural resources to feed the process of development has gone up in extent and intensity. This process has characterised by the huge expansion of energy and resource intensive industrial activity and major projects like big dams, forest exploitation, mining, energy intensive agriculture, etc. The resource demand of development has led to the narrowing down of the natural resource base for the survival of the economically poor and powerless, either by direct transfer or resources away from basic needs or by destruction of the essential ecological process that ensure renewability of the life supporting natural resources.

Against this background, the ecology movements came up as the people's response to this new threat to their survival and as a demand for the ecological conservation of the vital life support systems. The most significant life support system beyond clean air are the common property resources of water,

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGangotri
The classical model forests and land on which the majority of the poor people of India depend for survival. It is the threat to these resources that has been at the centre of the ecology movements in the last few decades.

Among the various ecology movements in India, the Chipko movement (embrace the trees to oppose fellings) is the most well known². It started as a movement of the hill people in the state of Uttar Pradesh to save the forest resources from exploitation by contractors from outside. It later evolved to an ecological movement that was aimed at the maintenance of the ecological stability of the major

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upland watersheds in India.

Exploitation of mineral resources, in particular the opencast mining in the sensitive watersheds of Himalaya, Western Ghats and central India have also done a great deal of environmental damage. As a result, environmental movements have come up in these regions to oppose the reckless operations of mining. Most successful among them is the movement against limestone quarrying in Doon Valley. While the Doon Valley has a long history of popular opposition to quarrying of limestone and a major Supreme Court order has restricted the area of quarrying to a minimum, examples of such success of the ecology movements are rare. People's ecology movements against mineral exploitation in the neighbouring Almora and Pithoragarh still seems to be ignored, probably due to the relative isolation of these interior places. Beyond the Himalaya, the ecology movement in the Gandhamardan hills in Orissa against ecological havec of bauxite mining has gained momentum and it draws, inspiration from the Chipko movement. The mining project of Bharat Aluminium Company (BALCO) in the Gandhamardan hills is being opposed by local youth organisations and tribal people whose survival is directly under threat. The peaceful demonstrators have claimed that the project could only be continued 'over our dead bodies's. The situation is more or less the same in large parts of Orissa-Madhya Pradesh region where rich mineral and coal deposits are being opened up for exploitation and thousands of people in these interior areas are being pushed to deprivation and destitution. This includes the coal mining areas around the energy capital of the country in Singrauli. In these interior areas of central India movements against both mining and forestry are becoming extremely volatile and people's resistance is growing.

Large river valley projects, which are coming up in India at a very fast pace, is another group of development projects against which ecology movements of the people have come up. The large-scale submersion of forests and agricultural lands, that is the prerequisite for the big river valley projects, always take a heavy toll of dense forests and the best food growing lands. These have been usually the material basis for the survival of a large number of people in India, specially the tribal people. The Silent Valley project in Kerala was opposed by the ecology move ment on the ground of its being a threat, not directly to the survival of its to the survival of the people, but to the gene pool of the tropical rains of the tropical rain forests threatened by submersion. The ecological movement against the Tehri high dam

in the UP Himalaya exposes the possible threat to the people living both above and below the dam-site through large-scale destabilisation of land by seepage and strong seismic movements that could be induced by impoundment. The Tehri Dam opposition committee has appealed to the Supreme Court against the proposed dam by identifying it as a threat to the survival of all people living near the river Ganga up to West Bengal. Most notable among the people's movements against dams on the issue of direct threat to survival from submersion are Bedthi, Inchampalli, Bhopalpatnam, Narmada, Koel-Karo, Bodhghat, etc. In the context of already overused land resources, the proper rehabilitation on a landto-land basis of millions of people displaced through the construction of dams seems impossible. The cash compensation given instead is inadequate in all respects for providing an alternate livelihood for the

majority of the displaced.

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While the process of the construction of the dam itself invites, opposition from ecology movements, the functioning of the water projects dependent on the constructed dams goes on to creating further ecological disasters and movements. People's movements against widespread water-logging, salinisation and resulting desertification in the command areas of many dams have been registered. Among them are the instances at the projects on Tawa, Kosi, Gandak, Tungabhadra, Malaprabha, Ghatprabha, etc., and the canal irrigated areas of Punjab and Haryana. While excess of water created ecological destruction in these cases, improper and unsustainable use of water in the arid and semi-arid regions generated ecology movements in a different way. The antidrought and desertification movement is becoming particularly strong in the dry areas of Maharashtra, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Orissa, etc. Ecological water use for survival is being advocated by water based movements like Pani Chetana, Pani Panchayat, Mukti Sangharsh, etc. Another major movement originating from the ecological destruction of resources by growth based development is spreading all along the 7000 km long coastline of India. It is the movement of the small fishing communities against the ecological destruction caused by mechanised fishing whose instant profit motive is destroying the coastal ecology and its long-term biological productivity in a big way.

No amount of the threat to survival in India from environmental hazards can be complete without a reference to the Bhopal tragedy in which, on December 3, 1984, following the leakage of poisohous methyliso cyanate from a pesticide plant of Union Carbide (India) Limited, several thousand people died or got affected by serious health hazards. People's movement for clean air and water is growing in all corners of the country, just as cologically irresponsible resource hunger of the process of growth is moving deeper in the hinterland in search of newer resources.

Development from the viewpoint of the Dispossessed Though the ecology movements relate to issues that are geogrphically localised, like forests or water pollution, their reverberations are national and even

global in import. This macro-micro dialectic is rooted in the cognitive gasps associated with development planning and this dichotomy has been analysed politically as the result of the existence of the two Indias4. Every development activity has a need for natural resources. In the context of limited natural resources, by either non-renewability or ecological limits to renewability, the resource needs of the two Indias are bound to complete with each other. In this unequal competition the survival of the less powerful but more populous micro-economy is directly threatened. This threat may come either by resource transfer or by ecological factors leading to resource degradation. Yet the significance of the ecology movements does not merely lie in the fact that they are voices of the dispossessed. The positive feature of these movements lies in the manner in which they make visible the invisible externalities of development based on a particular economic ideology and reveal its inherent injustice and nonsustainability. The recognition of these inadequacies and the imperatives arising from the right to survival creates another ground and another direction for development which ensures justice with sustainability, equity with ecological stability.

The ecology movements can no longer be considered merely as specific and particular happenings. They are an expression of the universal socioecological impacts of a narrowly conceived development based only on short-term commercial criteria. The impact of ecology movements cannot be assessed only in terms of the impact on particular projects they originate from. The impact, in the final analysis, is on the very fundamental categories of politics, economics, science and teconology which together have created the classical paradigm of development and resource use. The emerging irreversible threat to survival arising from the development process requires a re-evaluation not just of some individual projects and programmes which have been shown to be ecologically destructive but of the very conception and paradigm of development that generates such projects. The ecology movements are revealing how the resource intensive demands of current development have ecological destruction and economic deprivation built into them. They are also stressing that the issue is not merely of a trade off of costs and benefits because the cost of destruction of the conditions of life and well-being is not just a matter of money, it is a matter of life itself.

The most important and universal feature of ecology movements is that they are redefining the concepts of development and economic values, of technological efficiency, of scientific rationality — they are creating a new economics for a new civilisation.

The ideology of the dominant pattern of development derives its driving force from a linear theory of progress, form a vision of historical evolution created in eighteenth and nineteenth century western Europe and universalised throughout the world especially in the post-war development decades. The linearity of history pre-supposed in this theory of progress created the ideology of development that equated development with economic growth, economic growth with expansion of the market economy, modernity

with consumerism and non-market economics with backwardness. The diverse traditions of the world with their distinctive technological, ecological, economic, political and cultural structures were driven by this new ideology to converge into a homogeneous monolithic order modelled on the particular evolution of the west. The creation of development as ideology was based on the universalisation of the western economic tradition and its unquestioned acceptance as progress.

The Rostowian model of stages of economic growth is the clearest articulation of these assumptions. Rostow presents change as taking place in three stages. The first stage consists of traditional

society:

whose structure is developed within limited production functions, based on pre-Newtonian science and technology and on pre-Newtonian attitudes towards the physical world...The central fact about the traditional society was that a cciling existed on the level of attainable output per

The totality of development experiences, however, does not reflect this simple linearity and stage by

stage evolution.

The inter-relationship between resources within the same ecosystem as well as interlinkages between economic activities between segments of society makes the economic development process more complex and multidimensional. Viewing the world as an ecologically interrelated whole leads to a concept of development that puts a premium on maintaining the ecological balance and integrity while satisfying basic human needs. In this context, the 'backwardness' and 'low productivity' of nonwestern societies is based on the assumption of the ideology of classical development that recognises productivity only in the context of commodity production. The 'high productivity' of the latter similarly has been based on a narrow and specific interpretation of productivity. The resource intensity of modern production processes, geared towards profit maximisation in the absence of the awareness of other forms of productivity, leads to ecological deterioration and loss of resource productivity, which remain hidden externalities in development economics. The internalisation of such negative externalities over a large temporal and spatial horizon, in many instances, render the 'high productivity' processes extremely unproductive.

The second stage of Rostow, characteristic of the dual sector model, originates from a misleading representation of the material foundations of the visible and formal development process. In the context of limited resource base, the resource demands of the development process are often satisfied by diverting resources away from survival needs and life-support functions. Modernisation and economic growth based on resource intensive processes compete for the same resources as are also used for the satisfaction of basic survival needs, either directly or through the destruction of ecological functions performed by the resources. The second stage is clearly not a temporary co-existence of two unrelated sectors, namely, the "dynamic and progressive" modern and the 'stagnant and backward' traditional.

There is a distinct relationship between these two

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Channal and Gangerism' of the modern resource flow from the traditional. The growth and productivity of the modern has to co-exist with the poverty and backwardness of the traditional. In the context of absolutely unequal sharing of the cost of economic growth, visible development accrues to the privileged while invisible underdevelopment accrues to the dispossessed. The Rostowian approach assumes that in the process of development the economy exploits hitherto unused sources' which is true in the case of resource abundance. However, in the present context vital natural resources like forests, water, land, etc., are all scarce and have a number, of competing requirements and demands on them. These could be associated with the maintenance of ecological processes of renewability of natural resources or of the life support system of those externalised by the formal process of development. The diversion of resources otherwise needed for human survival for safeguarding the ecological processes remain invisible. Thus, in the context of the conflicting demands on scarce resources, economic growth leads to economic polarisation and not necessarily to universal prosperity. The rapid growth of the people's ecology movements is a symptom of this polarisation and a reminder that natural resources play a vital role in the survival of the people. Their diversion or destruction through other uses, therefore, leads to impoverishment and an increasing threat to survival.

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The "underdeveloped" societies are not those that are yet to be affected by growth and development, as the dual sector model supposes. The real underdevelopment of the hinterland takes place simultaneously as an integral part of the whole process of contemporary growth and development in which gains accrue to one section of the society or nation and the costs, economic or ecological, are borne by the rest. From within the societies and nations getting the advantages of resource use, Rostow's take-off stage can be seen as a reality. When one sees the process of development from the perspective of those who are underdeveloped as a result of its resource intensity, the 'take-off' often gets translated to 'roll-down' into underdevelopment or ecological disasters. Britain's 'take-off' at the end of the 18th century was made possible by the underdevelopment of the colonies in three continents. The destruction of Indian textiles industry and Indian agriculture, the slave trade from Africa and the genocide of the indigenous North American people were the preconditions for the economic growth in the centers of modern industry in Britain. The illusion of the contemporary take-off stage in countries like India and the vision of a flight to the 21st century are made possible through a similar process of the invisible destruction of the base for survival of millions of marginal people. The opposition of the ecology movement to resource destructive development and growth arises from the recognition that the creation of tion of resources for growth is achieved through the destruction of resources for the survival of the people.

The Rostowicz Survival of the people. The Rostowian fiction of the take-off of the whole society with improved quality of life for all the members ignores the society with improved quality of life for all the members ignores the economic polarisation and ecological destruction inherent in resource intensive

development. It appears rea Piglized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennal and eGangotri development. The ecology historical conditions of colonialism or enclavised development the invisible costs of growth are borne by the colonies or hinterlands. The geographical separation of the regions benefitting and the regions losing in the process left the resource destruction of the colonies and the hinterlands invisible and led to the superficial impression that economic growth takes place in an absolute sense. This impression was used to universalise the Rostowian model for all countries, all people and all historical periods and this became the ideology of development.

The ideological universalisation and enclavisation of the process of growth, and development is the reason for the simultaneous existence of underdevelopment alongside economic growth in the newly independent countries like India which accepted quick and resource intensive industrialisation as the path towards development. Like the erstwhile colonies, interior and resource rich areas of the country are bearing the costs of resources diversion and destruction to run the resource intensive process of development. Communities living in these interior regions and supporting themselves on the local resources are as a result facing serious threat to their survival.

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The ecological relationship of the growth of affluence for a few regions and some people, on the one hand, and the collapse of the resource base for survival for many, on the other, clearly contradicts Rostow's notion of the third stage of take-off in which 'old blocks and resistances' are overcome and the prosperity of the enclaves becomes pervasive throughout society. The impoverishment of the peripheries and the erosion of the resources and rights of marginal communities actually pay for the material basis of the prosperity of the enclaves. This prosperity can neither be reproduced for regions and peoples whose impoverishment and deprivation are rooted materially and ecologically in the same process of growth nor can the enclavisation process be sustained. The new poverty and dispossession create new 'blocks and resistances' to the diffusion of the development process, making enclave development and underdevelopment of the hinterland a permanent feature of development based on resource intensive processes. Dichotomising tendencies and principles of exclusion seem to reflect the situation more realistically than the linear model of progress. The simplistic dichotomy between the modern and traditional sectors of the linear model is misleading because the traditional itself is transformed and underdeveloped by the resource demands of the modern sector. This misleading dichotomy needs to be replaced by the more complex contradiction between sectors of society making conflicting and unequal demands on limited resources; between demands for profits and requirements of survival; between sustainable and non-sustainable patterns of resource use, between of natural between socially just and unjust use of natural resources. The reality of the ecological non-sustainability of the ecological model sustainability of the accepted development model and the threat to survival arising from it need to be internalised into a new framework for understanding of economics and technology in a more

movements are providing these insights for this new realism based on resource-sensitivity and recognition

of people's right to survival.

While the above analysis emanates from the situation in the market economy oriented countries within the Third World, the issues raised by it are universal in character. Serious rethinking about the delicate relationship between economy and ecology is going on in both the advanced market economies and the socialist countries. Human-kind as a whole is feeling a special responsibility towards the global future. It is looking for a new philosophy to live in harmony with nature and ecology that is needed to give a new meaning and relevance to economics⁶. (To be continued)

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Gram: MAINWEEKLY

Business and Environment

By Dr. A.S. Ganguly, Chairman. Hindustan Lever Limited

The changes in our business environment during the last five years were not only unanticipated but also occurred with a speed that has left most of us somewhat breathless. All this has happened at a time when the international economic order led by the OECD is also undergoing major transformations, more significantly in countries such as China and the Soviet Union.

In India, a visible manifestation of this transformation is the increase in competition, wider choice for the consumer, handsome growth of capital stock in certain sectors and the rising incidence of industrial sickness. The mega acquisitions resemble some of the Western spectaculars but their relevance and utility at this point in our development is another matter altogether.

Managing enterprises has acquired new meaning compared to what we have been traditionally preoccupied or trained to deal with. Marketing, manufacturing, investment, innovation and quality are only a few elements where excellence and leadership are now becoming mandatory for the conduct of profitable operations. Major changes can now be brought about only by managers who are primarily change agents. They can, however, hope to flourish only in organisations whose environment encourages change.

The memories of long waiting periods, shabby products and escalating prices have dimmed a great deal. The plethora of choice and heat of competition is not restricted to the elitist niche in the upper echelons of urban markets. The consumer market, the value-for-money segment as well as vast and major segments in our rural markets have also begun to benefit from the impact of these changes.

This competitive development has had a two-fold consequence. Price escalation has been controlled. Improvements in the quality and packaging of products have also been significant. Further, price elasticities have narrowed or shifted to such an extent that they threaten many 'once successful' products. Improvements in advertising, communications, deliveries, and after sales services, among others, are all an outcome of the new competitive market pressures.

Managing a product in tune with such market forces assumes a critical role, historically, in our shortage-prone economy, marketing was perceived as a luxury that did not seem relevant to the needs of the Indian consumer. This view is now rapidly changing. Expenditure on unsuccessful product launches can whittle away the vitals of an organisation in the absence of sound, professional marketing management and high quality market research.

quality market research.

Recent developments in the Indian market have started to bear a similarity to traditional free markets, where the primary determinants of success are price and quality. In this scenario, product casualty rates are high and costly. What is clear is that the consumer can be attracted only by cost effective technology, quality and efficiency which are built into a product, no matter to which income segment he or she may belong. Thus, marketing can deliver the goods only if it is supported by leading edge innovations and a management committed to improving productivity and quality.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

We heard complaints that Indian industry would forever be condemned to live with obsolete imported technology, that our industries had neither the inclination nor the comprehension to use indigenously developed technology, and that perpetual dependence on imported technology served some vested interests. The point that most of us seem to have missed is that R&D or investment in innovation becomes a weapon in one's armoury only under reasonably free market conditions. Industry generally turns to science, technology and innovation only if that enables the attainment of a competitive lead at an acceptable cost.

In the changing business environment, investment in R&D will progressively become important for evolving corporate strategies and plans. I envisage a rapid build-up of linkages between Universities and National Laboratories on the one hand, and leading industries or groups/associations on the other, precisely to develop technology couplings and alliances. Simultaneously, major industries will find it advantageous to invest in in-house R&D facilities. These will upgrade the country's total

science and technology mass while providing exciting opportunities ${\it l}_{\rm ff}$ young Indian scientists and innovators.

Hindustan Lever's experience in this respect has been rewarding Ran was the key to Hindustan Lever's spectacular success in import substitution and development of indigenous technology in the early place. Today, R&D provides innovative strength and support in the transic mation of our traditional business and a three to five year technological in certain instances. It has also helped create new niches and investment opportunities. Commercialising innovation has now be significantly deregulated and, thus, become somewhat easier.

In the intensely competitive areas, particularly consumer products, to unusual combination of managing the market and scientific innovabre will determine the extent of success in the long run. Our econoar policies are now creating an enabling environment in which science and technology will have a very important role. Among the development, india is probably the best equipped to derive advantages has this development.

HUMAN RESOURCES

A general view prevailed in our country not so long ago that a captal investment, once made, and an organisation, once established, was survive forever. A permanent job guaranteed livelihood till retirement. This view got reinforced when the Government promptly took ow some of the companies which started turning unviable and sick regardless of whether those companies and their products had a future.

Workers and trade union leaders have to own part of the responsibly for industrial sickness in general, and the sad state of some of the man urban industrial centres in particular. Our appalling inefficiencies are poor work ethics, which may not have been as evident in the days shortages and controls stand painfully exposed as major weakness today. Unconscionable wage increases, stagnant productivity and may type trade union leadership have combined to shut down major most tries, causing the loss of hundreds of thousands of jobs. These rates had to be tolerated when industry was hemmed in by unreasonable controls.

Industrial liberalisation and heightened competition is changing altispermanently. While labour laws have become antiquated and virus ineffective, Government policies which encourage dispersal of industriation backward area locations have helped improve matters. Market forces are now compelling modernisation, productivity improved and value addition efficiency like never before. Some parts of the current where industry had been severely affected by obscurants have unionism, are today showing heightened pragmatism to general safeguard employment as well as to attract new investment. Industrial safeguard in the game of economic and industrial development, only of ahead in the game of economic and industrial development, only of the production of the safeguard employment as well as different and industrial development, only of the production of the safeguard employment as well as different norder to safe the safeguard employment as well as to attract new investment. Industrial ahead in the game of economic and industrial development, only of the safeguard employment as well as different new investment.

In the years ahead, industrial location will be guided primarily by or mercial considerations and sustainability rather than by regulatory social demands alone. An investment which does not maximise the social demands alone. An investment which does not maximise the eration of surpluses cannot contribute to the country's social great deal of the country's social great deal of the social soci

In the current rising wave of economic growth and liberalisation and the absence of systematic market research, capacities far in exact demand have been set up in many industries. Thus, in addition to a demand have been set up in many industries. Thus, in addition to a demand have been set up in many industries. Thus, in addition to a demand have either turned sick or have shut down. The Government have either turned sick or have shut down. The Government has several imaginative measures to revive many of these. The Board Industrial Finance & Reconstruction (BIFR) was created to expect the several schemes.

Hindustan Lever has actively participated in the successful revival number of sick units. In every instance, managerial competence effectiveness was the key to the revival strategy, aided by the cooperation of the workers and support of the financial institutions.

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realists in marketing, market research, R&D or finance are being realists in marketing, market research, R&D or finance are being realists in which only the dopon to perform under competitive pressures in which only the dopon to perform under competitive pressures in which only the story that the performance is an analysis of the clearly define their tasks and become accountable for their tasks.

rihese circumstances, the role of Senior Management has also of dadically. Most industries and individuals can no longer afford and rate laurels. While track record and potential were important and the record and potential were important and the record and potential were important. on their laurers. While track record and potential were important in career progression, these qualities have been, to an extent, as pleadership qualities, ability to deal with uncertainty and, by the ability to take charge of large tasks, perform them such the important change agents in an exception. and be important change agents in an organisation.

ty function of a change agent is to be able to transmit the com-logic of change and its consequences on the organisation, and a logic of change and its consequences on the organisation, and and how it affects the future of the individual in the organisation. mication down the line has become imperative. It serves to remication down the line has become imperative. It serves to repeople about the tasks to be performed, goals to be achieved that role and responsibility in achieving these. In the factories, party in the older ones, the logic of modernisation and productivity extend is related to the prospective health of the unit and all who replyed therein. This is probably the single most important substantial to the prospective health of the unit and all who replyed therein. This is probably the single most important substantial to the prospective health of the unit and all who replyed therein.

thre health of an organisation is no longer the sole responsibility remanagement, but that of all employees. This process of change the greatly facilitated with the cooperation of mature and experied rade union leadership. On the other hand, such logic is either prehensible to some of the new generation leaders with no social moorings, or they have an overpowering vested interest. mation. It is almost like dealing with an infected limb in the body.

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AUE ADDITION AND QUALITY OF GROWTH .

white consequences of the changes I have described is that organisteps an organisation react to change much faster, cuts down the caracy and operational costs, and is more amenable to the creament functioning of task forces of specialists who deliver results ime and resource limitations.

Industan Lever, we work on the premise that all individuals and the sinust add value. Thus, in setting objectives, defining individuals and setting objectives and achievements. We team goals and rewarding performance and achievements, we the individual's role in adding value to our operations. All this accomplish translations and growth rates. acentually translate into market share, margins and growth rates.

corporate strategy is able to orchestrate its structure with its similar in the ideally poised to meet real consumer expectations, genalized in the economy as well as reward its employees and similar in the economy as well as reward its employees and similar in the economy as well as reward its employees and similar in the economy as well as reward its employees and similar in the economy as well as reward its employees and similar in the economy as well as reward its employees and similar in the economy as well as reward its employees and similar in the economy as well as reward its employees and economy is expected.

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all of what I have described has been derived from our experi-infindustan Lever. The restructuring of our Vanaspati, Dairy and feeds businesses in 1984 was primarily to strengthen and make businesses more competitive, while protecting the interests of the strength of t

instructions and shareholders.

Bengal, Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, Pondicherry, a pradesh and Uttar Pradesh were the outcome of more practical and or industrial policies, which have in turn reinforced our viaging the revival of sick units in Punjab, Gujarat and Karnataka.

sure revival of sick units in Punjab, Gujarat and Nathataka.

Sansalination structure is now aimed at shortening the chain of com
decision making, and the accountability that goes with it. This, in

saplice as well as more efficient financial controls and manufactur-

the encouraging development is the improvement in quality of the responsiveness of our R&D scientists. This has been facilitated by to communicate more explicitly our business priorities added advantage is the the enthusiasm for, and quality of, basic seems to be improving remarkably. This will, hopefully,

put paid to the myth that business pressures on innovators are detrimental to good science. In virtually all parts of our business, as a result of the pressures thrust upon us by an increasingly demanding market-place, there is a level of heightened performance which could not have been contemplated a few years ago.

Interesting developments are taking place in the sphere of human relations as well. In one of our largest and oldest units, productivity progressively eroded for over five years, during which time unreasonably high wage agreements chipped away at prolitability. Rampant labour indiscipline also infected the unit. A dedicated team of managers valiantly spent months, counselling the workers and their leaders about the imminent danger of their actions on the future viability of the unit as well as the security of their employment.

This fifty-year-old factory was a vibrant, and at one time the most important, unit of the company. But under the circumstances described above we had no option but to suspend operations and make alternative arrangements to safeguard the rest of the business. The situation had to be dealt with comprehensively, which the unit management did with commendable compassion and understanding. Managing the fall out from a closed unit is more complex than operating it in normal times, since no management development prepares one for such an exigency.

Under similar circumstances, in another major location, the workers themselves resisted the aberrant behaviour of a handful of 'leaders' and in cooperation with the unit's managers, restored normalcy in output and the traditionally cordial relationship. In these endeavours, clearly communicating the real issues to one's own employees, the Government as well as the general public is extremely important in the interest of sustaining an amicable environment.

A more open and competitive marketplace compels today's management to take steps to reorganise and manage its affairs in a manner that adds to its strength in the marketplace. All other considerations have to be relegated to a subordinate status.

In anticipation of these changes, we had decided some time ago, that some of the finest minds amongst up and coming managers had to be inducted to deal with issues of personnel, communication and the envi-

The process of change and response will continue to be strengthened, as the market gets more competitive and demanding. Managing existing investments and making new ones, and doing both successfully, is the topmost priority in Hindustan Lever now and for its succeeding generation of managers.

CONCLUSION

The Indian economy and the business environment, currently undergoing important structural changes, will grow faster than ever and will encounter myriad complexities of a free enterprise system. The private sector, which had always clamoured for freedom to conduct its affairs, is now face to face with the realities of standing more or less on its own. We had not realised that change would be upon us as fast as it has.

Business now has an opportunity to transform individuals and organisations into vibrant and competitive entities. Industries which cannot generate surpluses can have no place in our country and its goal of a more egalitarian society. It is through productive endeavours and mutual cooperation of those engaged in industry and agriculture, that the larger issues of population control, unemployment and poverty alleviation can be effectively tackled. can be effectively tackled.

Can be effectively tackled.

The era of mutual distrust, Government controls and disruptive trade union movements must, under these changing circumstances, recede into the background. Our economy will get progressively drawn into the sphere of a new international economic order. International trade and export will now have to grow faster. Any attempt to interfere with these changes, either by seeking to become once again inward looking under the cloak of some antedituvian political philosophy, or at the behest of those who have enriched themselves from shortages and use of obsolete technologies, would be dangerous and could irreversibly damage our goals of economic development and social justice.

For the Indian managers and business leaders, a very exciting period lies ahead. Posterity will judge us by our success not only in running our individual enterprises, but how these have aided our transition from a developing into a developed nation.

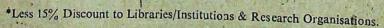
Abstract of the speech delivered at the Annual General Meeting of Hindustan Lever Limited held in Bombay on May 26, 1989. This does not purport to be a report of the AGM.

For full text in booklet form, write to: Communications Department, Hindustan Lever Limited, P.O. Box 409, Bombay 400 001.

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The Dangerous Decade Till 2000 AD

BOUDHAYAN CHATTOPADHYAY

Introduction

David Seligman had predicted "dangerous decades" for India a little too early. Of course, with the Indo-China border conflicts in 1962, the demise of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the war with Pakistan in 1965, and the abandonment of planning in the name of annual plans in the second half of the sixties, the country did experience the first symptoms of the breakdown of the consensus of the National movement and its ideology. This breakdown was signalled also by the ouster of the Congress from power in a large number of states. But, there was still some capacity for a response to the challenge, when, in 1969, Mrs Gandhi decided to initiate a number of radical structural changes along with the ouster of the extreme right within the Congress party, the Syndicate.

The impulses generated by this initiative, however, faded out soon enough as the rise of Sanjay Gandhi subverted both the Congress organisation and the usual rules of decency in public administration and life. Since then, the downhill journey has continued almost, uninterrupted. But, the country has never been so close to the precipice as it is now. The next decade is going to be the most dangerous - the very existence of the country, its sovereignty and integrity, being under the gravest ever threat

since the holocaust of 1946-47.

How has this come about, and how to turn away from the precipice?

The London Economist, in one of the recent issues,

sums up its diagnosis as follows:

The best explanation lies in a dull-sounding document, the Second Five-Year Plan, 1956-61. This laid the foundations of a system that has since managed to combine the stagnation of inefficient state control and the inequality

of unfettered markets.

The plan's ideology was based on Fabian socialism, which the ruling Congress party's leaders had picked up in London. The British practice of sending Indian raw materials to be processed in British reinforced the politicians' distributed of Their ideas were cians' dislike of capitalism and trade. Their ideas were tinged with Mahatma Gandhi's disapproval of worldly

The resulting blueprint is known as the Mahalnobis model, after the cabinet adviser who designed it; it was spelt

out in that Second Five-Year Plan.

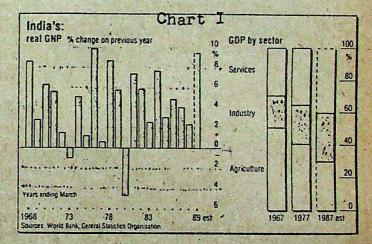
It then proceeds, in the typical British Tory condescending manner to give a pat-in-the-back to Rajiv Gandhi as follows:

Some of Rajiv Gandhi's best friends are businessmen. When he came to power in 1984, he brought in new people and a new restriction of the came to power in 1984, he brought in new people and a new restriction of the came to power in 1984, he brought in new people and a new restriction of the came to power in 1984, he brought in new people and a new restriction of the came to power in 1984, he brought in new people and a new restriction of the came to power in 1984, he brought in new people and a new restriction of the came to power in 1984, he brought in new people and a new restriction of the came to power in 1984, he brought in new people and a new restriction of the came to power in 1984, he brought in new people and a new restriction of the came to power in 1984, he brought in new people and a new restriction of the came to power in 1984, he brought in new people and a new restriction of the came to power in 1984, he brought in new people and a new restriction of the came to power in 1984, he brought in new people and a new restriction of the came to power in 1984, he brought in new people and a new restriction of the came to power in 1984, he brought in new people and a new restriction of the came to power in 1984, he brought in new people and a new restriction of the came to power in 1984, he brought in new people and a new restriction of the came to power in 1984, he brought in new people and a new restriction of the came to power in 1984, he brought in new people and a new restriction of the came to power in 1984, he brought in new people and a new restriction of the came to power in 1984, he brought in new people and a new restriction of the came to power in 1984, he brought in new people and a new restriction of the came to power in 1984, he brought in new people and a new restriction of the came to power in 1984, he brought in new people and a new restriction of the came to power in 1984, he brought in 1984, he brought in 1984, he brought in 1984, he brought in 1984, he brought in 1984, he brought in 1984, he brought in 1984, he brought in 1984, he brou and a new attitude to the economy. His mother had, out

The author is a Professor of Economics, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi, and Secretary (Honorary), Centre for Regional, Ecological and Science Studies in Development Allernatives (CRESSIDA), Calcutta. An abridged version of this article appeared in Patriot daily on April 6, 1989.

of necessity rather than conviction, begun to liberalise the system of state control. He accelerated the process, and even abandoned the rhetoric. "A poor country", he said in 1986, "cannot afford to carry on billing the poorest people for its inefficiency and call itself socialist. It is ridiculous.

Since even Thailand, the Philippines and Indonesia have, allegedly, done better than India and China in all indices except the infant mortality rate in which China shows the best performance, the patin-the-back is an invitation for India to follow in the footsteps of the ASEAN countries and the symbol of this new era dawning under Rajiv Gandhi's regime, is the zippy little Maruti, the car production having jumped from 43,000 in 1980 where it stagnated for about 20 years - to 290,000 in 1987. The accompanying charts are supposed to bear all that out.

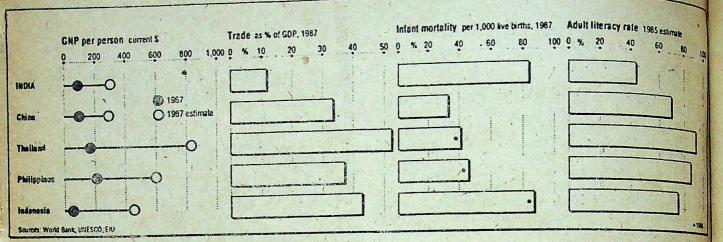


A Variant of the Second Way?

As early as in 1968, this writer had, in a paper published in the book, Homage to Marx, edited by the late P.C. Joshi, suggested the possibility of a constitutional dictatorship emerging in India out of the processes of the particular variant of the second way of capitalist development well set on its way, in spite of the best efforts of Jawaharlal Nehru. That was not because of the Second Five Year Plan, but because of the failure to follow through the inherent logic of that Plan. While the responsibility for this failure would lie squarely on the dominant national leadership of the first one and half decades of independence, part of the responsibility, howsoever small, cannot but be laid at the doors of the Indian Left - particularly its failure to carry forward, extend and consolidate the organisational base it had built over the period 1934-47 in the working class and the peasantry, under the new system of adult franchise.

In 1973, in a National Convention at the Mavalankar Hall, this writer had the occasion to publicly remark from the platform that India had entered a process of Latin Americanisation of the economy and polity. We have reached the brink of

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the precipice today as a consequence of the process of having slowly succumbed into the framework of some variant of the second way of capitalist development, not of the German or the Japanese variety, but more akin to the Italian, East and Central European (between the two World Wars), or even of the Latin American variety.

Lumpenisation of the society and polity, on the one hand, and the rise of social and political despotism and reaction, on the other, are the hallmarks of this process; violence its way of life, the commercial Indian cinema its ideology, daily diet, also the sup-

plier of Chief Ministers!

A weekly newspaper column is not quite the place to elaborate the analytical framework implicit in the above approach. Suffice it to say here that the prognosis of this analytical framework, when applied to a multi-ethnic, multi-religious and ancient Asiatic society of the variety and magnitude of India, would be as follows, unless counterveiling internal political and social forces are powerful and capable enough to intervene and build up economic and social sanctions to alter the very premises of this particular variant of the second way of capitalist development.

Prognosis and Counter-measures

The major social classes in such a society would be in a state of flux, the line of demarcation across social groups being blurred, particularly because of the interplay of caste and class; and very special efforts would have to be made to develop autonomously the basis of class consciousness through political and social action not merely in terms of the socalled "demands" for higher wages, etc., but in terms of the capacity to intervene in the production and allocation of resources, a task which has been completely ignored by the Left, with the noble exception, perhaps, of the Toddy Tappers' Cooperatives and the Writers' Cooperative in Kerala.

The next step in the development of the peasants' and agricultural labourers' organisations and land reforms, simply cannot be undertaken without the corresponding mass organisations taking upon themselves the task of organising institutions for intervening on the structure of production and allocation of resources in the countryside. Even in the urban protection of construction workers, for urban sanitation and health, etc., various forms of cooperative economic and social organisations of the working people must be attempted, particularly in the States where the Left is powerful. In Gramscian terms, this would mean forging instruments of intervention in civil society prior to the capture and transformation of the political system. Without this link, conditions of adult franchise cannot be utilised to forge effective class consciousness, leaving the working people vulnerable to populist and/or fundamentalist demagogy of various sorts, religious, linguistic, ethnic,

In fact, the only way the Left parties can try to insulate themselves from the vicious tentacles of private purse-strings, is by depending openly, subject to public audit, on the contributions of these mass organisations, as the Labour Party in the UK does, or the Communist Party of Italy does Even in socialist countries, which have had revolutionary transformation of state power, like in the USSR and China, this task has not been properly fulfilled resulting in the ing in the monstrous distortions which are now evident all over.

In a country like India, this is one of the essential conditions for the fight against social and political reaction, particularly in the countryside and along the rural urban continuum. Unless the counterveiling power of the rural and urban poor can be organised along the foregoing lines, the des potism of lawless property, landed and mercantile is bound to take over as the mass base of social and political fascism, the contamination from which may even invade segments of the Left, unless the Left is able to guard its flanks from infiltration of socially hostile elements. The lessons of Darjeeling and Tripura must not be lost.

The extensive criminalisation of the political and electoral system, extending to the rise of mafia "trade unionism", is a dangerous phenomenon, such as it exists in the acad angerous phenomenon, such as it exists in the coal fields and around certain giant power stations, holding the entire system to ransom. Unless the Left unites to give up its policy of maintaining separate taining separate electoral boroughs called trade unions and Kisan Sabhas, and really acts unity, its utterly misused its utterly misused concept of working class unity,

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Left would deserve to be hanged separately, which

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Labour cooperatives of various trades and occupations must be formed on the scale of a mass movement all over the country led by the Left, if the phenomenon of massive industrial sickness, particularly of the small scale and household sectors, and the distinct tendency of feminine work participation rates to decline, have to be countered in some measure. The mystical notion that all these can be done only after the magical people's democratic or national democratic revolution takes place, is a symptom of petty bourgeois lethargy and parasitism of an intellectually barren leadership, which it is becoming increasingly suicidal to tolerate. That is the way how not to prepare for any revolution whatsoever.

The massive phenomenon of industrial sickness and the virtual continued de-industrialisation of West Bengal, are partly the legacy of the obsolescence of colonial industrialisation. But non-SSI sick units and weak units (not covered by the Sick industrial Companies Act) numbering about 1700 (end-June 1987) all over the country, account for nearly Rs 4200 crores, that is, about three-fifths of the total amount of Rs 5700 crores outstanding with the term-lending institutions. They constitute the memorial to the dead, a mortuary for the profligacy of private enterprise, which in India continues to be strongly afflicted by the attitudes and preferences of their mercantile and/or landed origins, thanks to which these business houses, mostly run as close-knit families, use their capital as they use their women.

Policies promised on the preferences and attitudes of such private enterprises have been increasingly toyed with since the abandonment of the Nehru-Mahalanobis model after the fateful watershed of the devaluation in June, 1966. A probe into the operations of the nationalised banks, perhaps, would prove the following profile as not too atypical:

Suppose that about 25 per cent of the advances of a public sector bank are composed of "Sick " Accounts", which do not even earn the rate of interest; about 75 per cent of these Sick Accounts are held by 15 to 20 interlocked business houses, who never intend to pay up; if these Sick Accounts are, say, held by plantation units, such as, the tea gardens of North Bengal and Assam altogether fictitious transfers from one party to another take place, converting outstanding working capital dues into term-lending which will be bad debts in due course; this is done with the full knowledge of the bank concerned, further compounding the locked up capital of the bank as a selffeeding endless process; as a result, close scrutiny might reveal that, at least in the case of some banks, the Balance Sheet showing, perhaps, a small surplus, is actually gravely in the red. But for nationalisation, there would be a run.

Some recent reports of the PAC have sounded a similar warning.

This is privatisation of the public sector par excellence even without Maggy Thatcher. This is what can be legitimately characterised as "bureaucratic capital", a major feature of what Gunder Frank CC-0. In Public Domain. Gur would call the "lumpen bourgeois" in the Latin American context. The London Economist is happy and gives a pat-in-the-back to Rajivji because his and former Finance Minister, V.P. Singh's policies are going to pave the way for Thatcherism to take over and render this economy utterly vulnerable to the invasion of international capital, once again, to complete the process of Latin Americanisation initiated more than a decade back.

The foreign debt trap and the domestic budgetary deficits, particularly opened up by the first three budgets of the Rajiv Government, with the enthusiastic participation of V.P. Singh, to start with, constitute the mechanism through which the next steps in the Latin Americanisation of the Indian economy and polity are going to take place - the steep jump in foreign collaboration and the new Seed Import Policy being the thin edges of the sword.

The Philippines and Mexico, the homes of HYV rice and wheat, respectively, have had the full blast of the consequences of a package of such policies. Now, both Venezuela and Mexico - in spite of the fact that both have the distinct advantage of being oil exporters - in fact the whole of Latin America, are in the throes of the gravest ever crisis.

"Today it is Venezuala, and tomorrow it may be Brazil, Mexico, Argentina or any other Latin America or Caribbean country". That was a telegram from Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega to President Carlos Andres Perez at the time when Venezuela was counting the hundreds of dead and thousands of wounded in the threeday unrests early March, which were caused solely by the soaring prices, reports Tanjug-Pool.

Analysts agree that bloodshed in the streets of Caracas is the beginning of identical chain unrests in other countries in the region, which entered 1989 with an income levelling down to that in the seventies, and is receding towards greater poverty. The IMF conditionalities are on the rampage.

It is a matter of days and months, they say, when an explosion of social unrest, set off in Caracas will spread to other countries in the most indebted region in the world, echoing almost what Fidel Castro had said in mid-1988, that he (at that moment) did not know "one statesman capable of stopping Latin America's progress." And Perez has now seconded this,' saying 'what is happening on the streets of Caracas awaits all Latin Américan countries".

Both Venezuela and Mexico had spells of high growth. India, in spite of an artificial high growth this year, is all set to plunge headlong unless the turn around from the precipice can be effected by a strong, certain political leadership, unwilling to play the populist ball, or respond to the neo-colonialist decoy devices. Unfortunately, Indian politics as it stands today leaves hardly any other alternative unless the National Campaign Committee initiated by the Left, produces such an alternative as the only way out for political democracy to survive in this CC-0. In Public Domain. Gurukul Kangri Collection, Haridwar

country along with economic independence and national integrity.

The Impending Catastrophe

It must be noted that there is no sign yet of the Rajiv regime waking up to the dangers of the shortsighted, quick-fix modernisation through import liberalisation policies embarked upon by it, some times in total disregard of national priorities. For instance, only the other day a major Indo-German soft drink EOU has been cleared. Coming in the wake of the Pepsi and the Coca-Cola, this Indo-German collaboration sounds the all-clear message to the entry of big time international agri-business into the Indian economy and polity.

And this is happening in full knowledge of the fact that even the latest Reserve Bank Survey of the Foreign Controlled Rupee Companies (FCRC) show that, while the gross profits as percentage of net assets or profits after tax as percentage of net worth of the FCRC are more than double that of Indian Public and Private Limited Companies (IPPLC), the former foreign collaboration industries, taken together, continued to be net losers of foreign exchange, as they have always been since independence. The net foreign exchange performance of 179 companies in the private sector assisted by the Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India (ICICI), and of 315 private sector companies assisted by the Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI) for the year 1987-88, continues to run large net foreign exchange deficits even as the share of foreign financing of all capital expenditure undertaken by the ICICI — assisted companies is are slated rise from nine per cent to 12 per cent between 1987-88 and 1988-89.

As such "modernisation" gains momentum, by its very nature, it adds to industrial employment only minimally, since the technology transfer is, by definition, geared to the more capital intensive Western design. No wonder that, the latest Economic Survey laments the virtual long period stagnation of industrial employment in the private corporate sector, in spite of the great booms claimed in the capital market in the face of the appearance of a whole new tribe of international operators on the stock market, with NRI bases abroad.

These are likely to be the latest Indian variants of the "Alibabas" as the Indonesian frontmen of Japanese capital are characterised.

One does not have to be a socialist to see that the lessons of 100 years of Japanese capitalist industrialisation, between the 1880s to the 1980s, carry a completely different message, which a country of India's S&T resources has no reason not to draw upon. It is only the national political-intellectual will, which is lacking.

What even J.R.D. Tata could do in the first decade of this century, or what Acharya Prafulla Chandra Roy could pioneer in the twenties has been lost sight of in the euphoria of thoughtless, quickfix ideas of technological upgradation of an alto-

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennal and eGangotri Most of it is fragmented, screw-driver technology, as in the field of electronics and computers, or in the field of undesirable nonpriority areas such as seed imports and soft drinks.

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It is this kind of "modernisation" mania, which put paid to the Shah of oil-rich Iran, and raised the ghost of the dead past, Khomeini, to avenge the sins of the greedy "infidels." Protagonists of the Ramjanam bhumi/Babri Masjid, the Shiv Senas and the Hindu Parishad, with the RSS, the Jamiat and the Ananda margis are only waiting for the opportune moment to strike. Hundreds of thousands of Indonesian Communists and Tudeh Party activists have had to perish.

Last, but not the least, one has to draw the attention of all radical and patriotic forces to the supreme task of making the Indian public sector work in a productive and efficient manner. If business and bureaucratic leadership has failed to provide Indian enterprise the necessary managerial and technological wherewithal for an efficient and resource generating public sector, the leadership of the working classes must try to provide the way out, including the possibility of leading the production system also, as Gramsci adumbrated in his famous writings on the Factory Production Councils. Particularly, under the Left Front State Governments, the performance of the State and Public Undertakings and of the public services in education and health have to bear a major responsibility in providing a demonstrable national alternative. That will be a truly revolutionary contribution in the present stage of the Indian economy and society. The performance so tar has been, unfortunately, dismal, particularly so in West Bengal.

It goes without saying that the above set of interventions presume the existence and formulation of feasible comprehensive national programmes of advance to be championed by the Left for every walk of social, cultural and economic life. Otherwise, the prognosis for South Asia, according to one of the better, Latin American global models, is that even a five year delay in the adoption of radical corrective measures, counted from the year 1990, would lead to 150 million avoidable infant deaths in the subcontinent.

In large parts of the tribal heartland of Eastern and Central India long run processes of environmental degradation and social decay are heading towards a situation increasingly resembling that in sub-Saharan Africa. Urban blight and inhuman living conditions for vast numbers in the cities are also heading for a disaster of which the cholera epidemic in Delhi last year was only a straw in the wind

The strain on the system are already too much for it to survive these last straws on the camel's back, even if we could somehow avert a re-enactment of the holocaust of 1946-47 — an agenda largely for the politicians to decide upon before the next general elections! They will be responsible for

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Reinforcing NAM's Viability

SUMIT CHAKRAVARTTY

THE Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement, that met in the Zimbabwean capital of Harare from May 17 to 19 at the level of the Foreign Ministers, has given sufficient testimony of the fact that despite the various pulls and pressures within it - as had been witnessed at the Conference of Non-Aligned Foreign Ministers at Nicosia last September — the movement continues to play a viable role in the world today. The meeting convincingly established that under Zimbabwe the NAM has not been marginalised in the current international scene, even if such a feeling has gripped the minds of several member-states in the light of the new superpower detente which Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's breath-taking initiatives for a lasting peace and security across the globe have lately ushered in.

The Harare meet aptly focussed attention on the situation in southern Africa in the wake of the serious efforts by Pretoria to sabotage the United Nations plan for Namibia's independence. This focus was not in the least unexpected. But it assumed

significance on more than one count.

"We wanted Zimbabwe to come as the NAM Chairman because we wanted southern Africa to be on the frontburner. And we have done that," said Dr A.W. (Archie) Singham, one of the leading specialists of non-alignment and Publicity Consultant to the UN Institute for Namibia based in Lusaka. Speaking to journalists after the meeting, Dr. Singham was quite convinced that the "Namibian question could not have been resolved had Zimbabwe not been the Chairman" because a frontline state as the Chairman made the NAM directly involved in the issue. Moreover, Zimbabwe's military challenge to South Africa, coupled with the offensives against Pretoria launched by the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) of Namibia and Angola, had led to the "defeat of South Africa as the military gendarme of the region". This, in his opinion, was one of the most striking achievements of Zimbabwe's chairmanship that facilitated thereby the trilateral accord of December 22, 1988.

It is noteworthy that the Namibian peace plan, based on the UN Security Council Resolution 435 of 1978, is being implemented — despite the outdated character of the resolution and all the hurdles imposed by South Africa — in the last phase of Shamuyarira, the Foreign Minister of Zimbabwe,

The author is Special Correspondent of Mainstream. He recently visited Harare to cover the ministerial meeting of the NAM Coordinating Bureau. told this correspondent, the NAM can take justifiable credit for assisting the process of implementation of the plan "because unfortunately the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) has not been active on this front for different reasons".

"The NAM has been in the forefront of the Namibian struggle. We are the ones who have been petitioning and making representations to the five permanent members (of the UN Security Council). We are the ones who have been pushing (the UN Secretary-General) De Cuellar, and now pushing (the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Namibia) Ahtisaari. We have been pushing De Cuellar to appoint deputies to the leading UN personnel in Namibia," Shamuyarira asserted, noting that the UN Secretary-General "has now agreed to appoint a deputy to Ahtisaari, a citizen from Botswana" and "to appoint a deputy to General Prem Chand (heading the military wing of the UN Transition Assistance Group UNTAG), a general from Kenya who knows the area". He also detailed Zimbabwe's activities on this score.

Dr Singham averred that the NAM, by its unswerving support to the struggle against racist Pretoria, had in a curious way "militarily encircled the Republic of South Africa". This aspect of Zimbabwe's leadership of the NAM is of inestimable value. "Though it (Zimbabwe) did not engage in a combat with the Republic of South Africa, we have now changed the rules of the game" with Pretoria on the defensive as far as organising assaults on the neighbouring frontline states was concerned. The presence of two non-aligned states, Cuba and Angola, in the trilateral negotiations had also helped to accentuate Pretoria's isolation, he believed.

It was a different matter that South Africa was currently attempting to scuttle the UN plan for Namibian peace and independence. But here too it was not having smooth sailing. True, it went on a rampage against the SWAPO after April 1 (the date set for beginning the process of implementing the UN plan), taking advantage of the SWAPO's incursions into Namibia prior to that date. But it was forced to return to the path of negotiations as the decision to continue the execution of the independence plan — taken by Cuba, South Africa and Angola at the sand-swept airstrip of Cahama in southern Angola on May 19 — clearly signified.

According to Shamuyarira, the decision of the Cahama meet to send back the South African troops to base was a "major victory" that owed much to the NAM ministerial Bureau's wise step at Harare. "They (the South Africans) wanted to see what we would be saying. And they wanted to use that as a

kind of excuse if we had said that we zate Agoi 85 map our dation Chennal and Gangotri back the frontline states in sending our troops. If gillen the UN Rather, it was intended to strength the NAME and the Company of the NAME and the Company of the NAME and the Company of the NAME and the Company of the C the NAM had sent troops - South Africa was waiting for that to use it as an excuse for delaying

the process. So we avoided that."

On the other hand, if the NAM had blamed the SWAPO for the incursions prior to April 1 that would have been exploited by Pretoria to justify its savage and brutal attacks on SWAPO activists beginning April 1, he explained.

"But by striking a middle course as we did," Shamuyarira underlined, "by being very firm, by saying that South Africa is a stumbling block on this question, they must do such and such thing one, two, three - and not ourselves pronouncing any thunder or lightning, we put them in a corner. When they read the resolution they understood that they would now have to play ball.'

This indeed was the response to the Special Declaration on Namibia adopted at the Harare meeting. The declaration had affirmed the NAM Foreign Minister's unequivocal view that "South Africa's continued refusal to comply with the provisions of Resolution 435 by, inter alia, failing to order all its forces to base, is now the main obstacle to the effective implementation of the Namibian independence plan". With the culprit identified and the accused charged, South Africa was compelled to adhere to the new rules of the game.

Not that the Harare meeting did not face differences on the Namibian issue. The frontline states, Zimbabwe included, wanted to pointedly assail the role of the UN in Namibia. Others - among whom were Yugoslavia, India and even Cuba - called for circumspection and restraint so as not to undermine the world body's authority, even while voicing concern and criticising the decision to reduce the military component of the UNTAG when Koevoet and other South African para-military forces had been stealthily integrated into the Namibian police force. A compromise was eventually reached with Zimbabwe displaying considerable sagacity. The Special Declaration on Namibia, in its final shape. demanded the deployment of the full complement of the military component of UNTAG and an increase in the UNTAG police monitors in proportion to the strength of the existing South African police force"; and, in this context, "welcomed the Secretary-General's decision to appoint a Deputy Special Representative and increase the police component of UNTAG".

The Political Declaration did, however, convey that the Ministers were "shocked and dismayed" by the events at the beginning of April "when the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General authorised the redeployment of South African troops' (contrary to Security Council Resolution 435/78) resulting in the wanton killing of many Namibians In other words, what was sought to be transmitted was the unwitting violation by Maati Ahtisaari, the Finnish Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Namibia, of the letter and spirit of the UN Security Council. Resolution 435 of 1978 in its original and definitive form. This could not have

THE Harare meeting found the complete isolation of Pakistan on the Afghan issue, yet another major outcome of the Bureau meet. President Robert Mugabe as the NAM Chairman had pointed out, in his inaugural address, that the visit to Islamabad and Kabul by Shamuyarira undertaken at his directive "reveals a complete departure by certain of the parties from the Geneva Accords". He did not specify any country but declared unequivocally: 'Any posture not in accord with these Accords must certainly be condemned and vigorous appeals mounted to get all parties to work genuinely for peace and reconciliation." None had any difficulty in identifying the forces he was alluding to.

If Mugabe was circumspect, there was no reticence on the part of Shamuyarira to call a spade a spade. He made a startling disclosure in the course of an interview he gave to this correspondent. Mugabe was keen to meet the Foreign Ministers of Pakistan and Afghanistan at Harare, but the meeting could not be held as Sahibzada Yaqub Khan, the Pakistan Foreign Minister, refused to sit face with Abdul Wakil, the Afghan Foreign Minister, claiming that Pakistan had never held direct talks with represen-

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tatives of the Afghan Government.

"Although Yaqub Khan and Wakil came on the same flight (to Harare) and even embraced each other in the plane, they can't have talks," Shamurariya remarked sarcastically, barely able to conceal

his dismay at the Pakistani behaviour. "The Pakistanis are being very difficult on Afghanistan, very difficult. I found them more rigid than the mujahideen. I talked to all of them. I don't

mind that being said," he exclaimed. Asked if Pakistan had the support of other countries at the meeting, Shamuyarira's reply was unambiguous: "Pakistan was alone. It was isolated on this issue. No other government supported them on not wanting to talk." (The Saudis, who could have backed Pakistan, were conspicuous by their absence.)

On why an Eminent Persons Group to bring about reconciliation between the two countries (which had been suggested by the Afghan Foreign Minister and which found ready support from the bulk of the delegates) could not be set up, the Foreign Minister openly said: "Because of the intransigence of Pakistan.'

These words of the Foreign Minister, who chaired the Harare meeting, mirrored the extent to which Zimbabwe, a country that had all along enjoyed close and cordial relations with Pakistan, has been disappointed with the activities of Islamabad to torpedo the Geneva Accords.

Elaborating further, Shamuyarira said:

As a result of my visit (to Islamabad and Kabul) we were satisfied that Pakistan is the one violating the Accords. The Chairman (Mugabe) wanted to do two things; one, to have a meeting with Yaqub Wakil together, put some questions to them on the Geneva Wakil together, put some questions to them on the Geneva Accords to see whether the Pakistanis could come round; and two, to issue are a particular to the pakistanis could come round; and two, to issue an appeal to the two superpowers and

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pakistan refused the first one, saying they had never met the Afghans face to face, not even at Geneva and they

are not going to meet them at Harare.

On the second one, that is, the appeal, the way they talked themselves out of it was as follows: We said they were signatories to the Geneva Accords and therefore must take responsibility. They said: We are not directly responsible for or involved in the conflict. It is the mujahideen and they should be here to answer the questions pertaining to military solution and so on. They said: The mujahideen have written to you and the Chairman wanting the Afghan seat in the NAM and the least we could do is to hear them. So if we were keen on the appeal, would they be authorised to send a plane to pick up the mujahideen and bring them here immediately? They said they could get the mujahideen here in 24 hours.

Of course, that was not acceptable to us. A move forward in these matters the Pakistanis did not want. They just wanted to push the Trojan horse of the interim

government (of the Peshawar-based mujahideen).

Abdul Wakil, the Afghan Foreign Minister, revealed to this correspondent that Pakistan "tried very hard to bring some Afghan opposition forces (that is, the Peshawar-based rebels) with Pakistani passports to Harare as it had done in Riyadh (during the meeting of the Organisation of Islamic Conference or OIC); but did not succeed". Incidentally, Wakil's speech at the meeting's plenary session embodied one of the harshest attacks on Pakistan Afghanistan has ever launched. This was a transparent proof of the confidence and assertiveness Kabul has attained in the wake of developments following the Soviet pull-out. As, Wakil himself noted: "The resolute defence of the country by ourselves after the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan had had an effect on the countries of the NAM at this meeting."

He informed that he had had meetings at Harare with the Foreign Ministers of almost all the Islamic countries and "they have the same opinion with

regard to our situation as we are thinking".

"I'hat is why," Wakil recalled, "I had stated in my speech that the resolution which was adopted at the OIC against Afghanistan was not the unanimous opinion of these countries but just the forced imposition of the decisions of Saudi Arabia and Pakistan on those countries."

In Wakil's view, the developments at Harare on the Afghan front constituted a "victory for all those including friendly India who supported the cause of

Afghanistan''.

While speaking to this correspondent Shamuyarira was outspokenly candid in expressing his sense of disenchantment with Benazir Bhutto for allowing the military-bureaucratic complex in Islamabad to have a free hand in running the country's Afghan policy. Though he did not say so explicitly, he is learnt to have returned from Kabul convinced that the Najibullah Government cannot be dislodged by the mujahideen regardless of the scale of the latter's offensives.

WAKIL'S observation that the Foreign Ministers of most of the Islamic countries present at Harare hold similar views as Kabul on how to resolve the Afghan conflict. The truth conflict was not a rhetorical statement. The truth behind that assertion came out in the speeches of

several delegates. Among them of particular mention is the one by Ali Alatas, the Foreign Minister of Indonesia.

On the issue of Afghanistan, this is what Alatas said in his speech at the plenary session of the

Harare meeting:

We should ensure that the progress already achieved in finding just and durable solutions to some issues of priority concern to the movement, can be further accele-

rated and consolidated.

Among these issues, the comprehensive political settlement . of the Afghanistan question, based on the Geneva Accords, has assumed particular urgency. We have all welcomed the completed withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan. We should now look forward to the full and faithful implementation of the remaining provisions of the Accords, by all parties concerned, which would not only assure the restoration of the sovereignty, independence and non-aligned status of Afghanistan, but would also contribute to regional and international peace and security. In line with the (UN) General Assembly Resolution 43/20, adopted by consensus last year, my Government continues to believe that it is through the establishment of a broadbased government, with the widest support and participation of all segments of the Afghan people, that an early end can be put to further bloodshed and strife.

The Indonesian Foreign Minister also took a highly positive stand on the Cambodian imbroglio. His views on the subject were expressed in the

following words:

It was most heartening that at the latest round of intra-Cambodian talks, held in Jakarta only two weeks ago (on May 2 and 3, 1989), between Prince Sihanouk and Mr Hun Sen and between the latter and Mr Son Sann, substantive progress was again registered on a number of important aspects of a solution. These talks were preceded, and no doubt positively influenced, by the joint announcement on April 5 by Vietnam, Laos and the Phnom Penh authorities inter alia declaring the intended withdrawal of all Vietnamese forces from Cambodia by the end of September 1989.

These postures of Indonesia have been interpreted to mean that eager to get the nomination for hosting the Tenth NAM Summit, Indonesia is taking exceptionally accommodative stances on various issues, and more particularly on those ones which are most controversial. On Afghanistan and Cambodia, the Indonesian policy-perspective, it has been argued, is also conditioned by its keen desire to placate the USSR in the context of South-East Asia so that Moscow could act as a bulwark against.

Beijing's designs in the region.

THE Harare meeting was the last gathering to be chaired by Zimbabwe. It provided a measure of the path traversed by the NAM since Zimbabwe took charge of the movement in 1986. Initially Mugabe was a reluctant Chairman, an assignment he did not agree to take up but was finally persuaded to accept by Rajiv Gandhi and Fidel Castro in particular. Today, at the fag end of Zimbabwe's tenure, he has given ample evidence of being a reasonably active NAM Chairman displaying a sense of maturity few can hope to match. Zimbabwe has steered the movement along a course faithful to the original and fundamental NAM principles, the stress being naturally on the process of decolonisation in southern Africa - one of the basic objectives of the NAM since its inception.

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How would the movement proceed under Yugoslavia? This question was being asked by many at Harare. The simplistic US theory — grounded on the notions of a bipolar world order — is that the NAM could hope to become more "balanced" after the Belgrade summit. ,The reforms suggested in the sphere of the methodology of the movement's functioning have been interpreted to mean that reduction in the volume of the adopted documents would culminate in a less severe criticism of the US than has been so far. What such an interpretation fails to note is the success of the NAM in speaking out against superpower domination and there are enough independent nations playing a commendable role in the global arena to ensure that this essential feature of the NAM is not bartered away in the name of rethinking. This trend was marked in Harare, and it cannot be overlooked or ignored.

As far as Yugoslavia is concerned, its peculiar geographic as also political location in Europe lends it a character distinct from the other NAM states and also endows it with a perspective different from others. Thus its recent overtures to enter the European Economic Community (EEC) cannot be separated from its pre-eminence in the NAM and it is expected to use the NAM chairmanship to realise that goal. Both the holding of the NAM summit at Belgrade and the moves to get inducted into the EEC are intimately, linked to Yugoslavia's internal economic problems. But what is striking is the impact of Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's new ideas on those Yugoslav intellectuals who are capable of grasping the new potentialities before the movement in the new conditions of today. It is these intellectuals who have begun to assert in Yugoslavia the need to use the NAM, in the changed conditions, to tackle the basic problems of global survival - underdevelopment, the debt problem, the New International Economic Order, ecological issues — instead of seeking to "restore" the so-called "lost balance". - In a multipolar global environment, characterised by polycentric tendencies, such a comprehension carries considerable weight. Realisation is also dawning on the point that when East-West dialogue has enabled a breakthrough in the field of disarmament, North-South initiatives for real negotiations on questions of development do not brook the slightest delay. The Belgrade summit could open up a new dimension for the NAM on these lines. At least, there have been symptoms to that effect at Harare.

This perspective is not absent in Zimbabwe's evaluation of the movement as well. Obviously the emphasis here is on South-South cooperation and how to make it more productive, an issue that figured also in the speech of External Affairs Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao. As Shamuyarira highlighted, the first meeting of the NAM's Standing Committee for Economic Cooperation took place at Harare last year. "It was very successful. It prepared a document which not only updates us on the question of North-South dialogue but also really stresses South-South cooperation as a major thrust," he informed, adding that that thrust was assisted by (a) the South Commission headed by Julius Nurero

(which has already produced two valuable documents on the debt problem and the Uruguay round); and (b) the AFRICA (Action for Resisting Invasion, Colonialism and Apartheid) Fund which was a practical manifestation of South-South cooperation (wherein India as the Fund Chairman is playing a key role).

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It was no surprise that Shamuyarira spoke approvingly of India's role in both the working of the AFRICA Fund (which ill-informed opinion seeks to deride) and the general struggle against apartheid (whose elevation to a higher plane has been contributed in no small measure by the personal rapport between the Indian Premier and the Zimbabwean President, according to Shamuyarira). In Harare was signed an Indo-Zimbabwe accord on cooperation under the AFRICA Fund (of the Rs 50 erore Indian contribution to the frontline states and liberation movements in Namibia and South Africa under this Fund, a sum of Rs 7 crores will now be spent on three projects in Zimbabwe - relating to supplies of tarpaulin and heavy duty trucks from India as well as Indian assistance in setting up a refractory brick plant).

The Harare NAM Summit in 1986 had called for harmonisation and coordination of the action programmes of the NAM and the Group of 77. The NAM Bureau meeting found the Foreign Ministers expressing their desire to carry on efforts to that end in order to make the action programmes "mutually complementary". This is of special importance now that India and other interested NAM states are engaged in an endeavour to evolve a new International Development Strategy for the 1990s which the Western countries are seeking to de-emphasise. The Special Session of the UN General Assembly on Development next year will take up this issue in this entirety.

In recent years ecology and environmental problems are getting prominence in NAM meetings. The Economic Declaration of the Harare meeting devoted considerable attention to this issue on which External Affairs Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao had laid special stress in his speech at the plenary session. Recalling how Indira Gandhi had, as early as in 1972 at the first World Conference on Environment and Development, established the crucial link between environment and development, he pointed to the characteristic problems of the developing world on this score, and maintained:

Environmental degradation in developing countries takes place not on account of extravagant and unnatural life styles, but due to acute and pressing wants, shortages, poverty and population explosion: All these create their own pressures on natural resources. They cannot afford new and safe technologies; and our common planet will continue to suffer environmental damage. They must therefore be enabled to leap frog to the new technologies, by-passing the ones which have so far been employed by the developed world causing untold damage to the environment. The best form of assistance the developed countries can render to the developing world is to share the new and safe technologies freely with the latter. Given the seriousness of the situation, it is difficult to think of any other way out. For all mankind, this is the new talisman to achieve co-existence and to avert co-extinction.

(a) the South Commission headed by Julius Nyrere Gutok Managit College perpetrate inequality in the name of

protection of the global environment will just not protection of the global environment will just not "small low profile unit" of a permanent NAM Secre-work" and "extensively regulatory and emorgement tariat on the lines of the Commonwealth Secretariat mechanisms in this context are also doomed to

These views found manifestation in the final document of the meeting which expressed concern over the "growing tendency at external impositions and increased conditionalities in dealing with environmental issues" and advocated setting aside net addiresources financial for environmental cooperation so as to "assist developing countries in addressing their urgent environmental concerns and promote the transfer of alternative technologies to

developing countries".

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In the sphere of disarmament there was an interesting sidelight. The Pakistani delegation, which was quite cooperative with India in the Economic Committee, tried its best to play up the danger from conventional armaments over the nuclear peril. It even went on to highlight the threat posed to smaller countries by aircraft carriers and nuclear submarines in the possession of bigger neighbours. Obviously, it was a move to digress from the real issues of nuclear disarmament and needle India. The active legwork and lobbying by the young Indian officials foiled such a move. Here too, as on the Afghan question, Pakistan could not have its way.

THE report of the Ministerial Committee, that was set up at the Cyprus Conference of NAM Foreign Ministers last September to critically examine the functioning of the NAM and suggest structural reforms in the methodology of work, was approved and recommended for consideration at the Belgrade summit. The report, whose introductory part of the role of the NAM in the changing international climate bears the imprint of India's diplomat-experts, calls for prompt monitoring and analysis of events and offering of initiatives to meet the new situation. Stress is laid on holding more informal meetings among delegation heads; convening summits as of now every three years, with speeches rationed to 20 minutes each (while having their complete texts circulated); orienting ministerial conferences on review of developments and progress in execution of decisions; extensive documentation and their critical review; retaining the present concept of consensus at decision-making (consensus having been defined as "substantial agreement" not requiring unanimity) with wide ranging consultations preceding consensus enforcing implementation of decisions; institutionalising coordination between the NAM and the Group of 77.

The report urges for increasing coordination among NAM states (following the exemplary functioning of the Coordinating Bureau at New York which is described as the "linchpin" of coordination) at various places like Geneva, Vienna, Nairobi where where specialised agencies have their headquarters or important international conferences take place. It also states that the idea of establishing a "small Secretariat or alternatives therefor" needs to be further examined. Shamuyarira said Zimbabwe would put up, at the Belgrade summit, its case for a

"for administrative work only, to assist the chairing country to run the affairs of the organisation efficiently". According to the Yugoslav Ambassador to the UN, the Ministerial Committee to review the "will assist President functioning of the NAM Mugabe in proposing the formation of the Secretariat". India is strongly opposed to such a move that would institutionalise the NAM and alter its original character. But it is still to be seen if the Indian opinion would prevail at Belgrade as Yugoslavia is clearly taking an intermediate course on this issue.

After years of marginalised existence Egypt played a very active role on the Middle East issue in the meeting enjoying as it does today the confidence of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and sidelining in the process Syria, the only steadfast opponent of piecemeal concessions to Israel that have yet to bear fruit. Egypt's return to high profile activity in the NAM coincided with its efforts to join the ranks of the Big Five in the NAM today - Yugoslavia, India, Cuba, Algeria, Zimbabwe. Incidently, except for Zimbabwe all the other four were exceptionally low-keyed at the Harare meet. The PLO was, of course, given pride of place at Harare, recognised for the first time as Palestine following the declaration of an independent state.

The NAM Foreign Ministers' Committee of Nine on Palestine also met at Harare during the Bureau meeting and agreed to move the UN Security Council to discuss the question of Palestine and open the debate on the whole situation in the Palestinian homeland while pressing for an International Conference on the Middle East. (This Committee, of which Zimbabwe is the Chairman, comprises Palestine, Algeria, Bangladesh, India, Cuba,

Yugoslavia, Senegal and Zambia.)

The Left-Right barriers in the NAM, have to a large extent disappeared, thanks primarily to the change in the international climate a la Gorbachev. But on issues like Nicaragua's case for hosting the Tenth Summit they are likely to be revived. Venezuela, which is yet to become a member, is being backed by some states opposed to Nicaragua's nomination, but consensus in favour of Venezuela seems to be a remote possibility, precisely because it would be premature for a country which hopes to become a full-fledged NAM member only at the Ninth Summit to host the Tenth NAM Conference at the highest level. Indonesia is also in the run but this being Latin America's turn (in the light of bleak prospects of holding the summit at Baghdad), it is expected to back out. Reliable information suggests that in case Nicaragua is not accepted, Jamaica headed by Michael Manley could become a compromise choice for the venue of the Tenth NAM Summit.

Venezuela's row with Panama found most of the Latin American states including Cuba extending full backing to it, and hence its plea for full NAM membership was endorsed by the entire Latin American community with the exclusion of Panama whose objections to the move were also recorded.

plex internal situation in Panama was, however, given due importance in the final document at Harare and the movement's position on the issue spelt out without equivocation. This was: to enable the Panamanian people to "freely exercise their will, in full exercise of their civil and political rights without any pressure or foreign interference, within the political, economic and social system the same Panamanian people have chosen, and that only they can decide upon, without any foreign interference or intervention.'

THE Harare meeting saw Nepal publicly assailing India for the current crisis in Indo-Nepal relations. Shailendra Kumar Upadhayaya, the Nepalese Foreign Minister, had the following to underline in the course of his speech at the meeting's plenary

The recent happenings in the relations between Nepal and India have made us rather warily ask: does nonalignment help reinforce relations among nations or strain relations between neighbours? Precisely because we observed a policy of non-alignment faithfully, we are having troubled relations with India. On the one hand, the non-aligned movement has held that in the interest of a lasting global peace the current detente would have to become wider in scope, context and participation. On the contrary, if one were to look at the suffering and hardship caused to the Nepalese people today as a result of the actions taken by the Government of India, a foundermember of the non-aligned movement, against another founder-member, Nepal, one tends to ask; are the non-aligned movement's declarations meant for the consumption of countries other than the non-aligned?

The Nepalese Foreign Minister was, nevertheless, astute enough to hail Rajiv Gandhi's visit to China' (as a result of which, he said, "we in Nepal were filled with a sense of satisfaction") and welcome the Rajiv-Benazir dialogue at the Fourth SAARC Summit.

But he pleaded for separating the trade and transit treaties in the case of a landlocked country like Nepal and strongly advocated the transformation of Nepal into a zone of peace, a proposal that had been endorsed by 107 countries. "I only wish that those who have been hesitant may give a second thought and be fair enough to see the merits of the pro-

posal," he added.

Upadhayaya's behaviour at the plenary session was quite astonishing as he had called on Narasimha Rao at Harare on May 16 and discussed with him Indo-Nepal relations in depth. He had also promised to send a message after returning of Kathmandu. Thereafter, a couple of hours before his speech at the plenary, he had himself, in the morning of May 18, sought an appointment with Foreign Secretary S.K. Singh (which action by itself constituted a departure from protocol but which was presumably undertaken as Nepal regards S.K. Singh as a hawk in the Indian decision-making establishment initiator of the hard line vis-a-vis Nepal, something that is far from true). During conversations with the Foreign Secretary, the Nepalese Foreign Minister had said that the "Indo-Nepal dialogue must be made more vigorous" and that "we should commence, at the earliest, structured bilateral relations".

Upadhayaya urged S.K. Singh to take expeditious

steps to resume negotiations to resolve the mounting Indeed General Noriega stood in splendid isolation steps to resume negotiations to resolve the mounting in his opposition to Venezuela. The current companies the Nepalese Minister to send a detailed provided the Nepalese Minister to send a detailed the Nepalese Minister to sen the Nepalese Minister to send a detailed proposal on the dates, the venue and the agenda for the talks. Upadhyaya wanted India to take that step. SK insisted on Nepal sending the proposal.

In this setting the Nepalese Minister himself queered the pitch by levelling charges that India was forced to describe as "unwarranted and inaccurate" as well as "baseless". Rejecting them, the Foreign Secretary, who met Upadhayaya after the speech, lodged a strong protest with him and regretted that Nepal should have used an international forum to air its views on a purely bilateral matter.

Confronted with SK's protest, the Nepalese Minister is learnt to have mumbled that statements had to be made for the sake of enabling the world to know Nepal's position. But he assured that he would transmit to Kathmandu India's strong feelings on the issue.

However, India did not exercise its right to reply at the plenary (it did not do so also when Pakistan publicly raked up the Kashmir issue once again, the only difference being that Pakistani diplomats intimated this to the Indian side in advance; but chose to issue a statement reiterating the Indian position on the subject) on the ground that it wanted to strictly adhere to its "policy of not bringing in bilateral issues to multilateral forums". How far this approach is correct is, of course, open to question.

Several delegates, who were not aware of the intricacies of the dispute between the two neighbouring states in South Asia, could not understand why India chose to remain silent in the face of Nepal's allegations. A press statement issued by the Indian delegation after the incident did not deem it necessary to answer the charges one by one. That increased the confusion among the delegates. The leaders of the Indian delegation were seen privately trying to explain India's position to those making probing queries.

The incident revealed that Nepal is pursuing, by and large, a three-faced policy on the question of its dispute with India: towards its own people, towards India and towards the outside world. Before the Nepalese public the policy is one of strengthening the country's sovereignty regardless of the Indian reaction; before India the policy is one of sweet reasonableness; and before the world at large the policy is one of painting India as an expansionist power.

ON the whole, the Harare meeting marked a new stage in the NAM's search for redefining its identity in the present fast changing world situation. But there was ample evidence at Harare that in the name of pragmatism and change the original principles and objectives of the movement will not be sacrificed or surrendered. Zimbabwe played and is playing a pivotal role on this score. Yugoslavia too cannot now ignore the strong feelings in this regard among a large number of countries. This is high time for India to impart a sense of direction since many countries still look upto India to provide the necessary leadership to the movement. Unfortunately there was no sign of any Indian activity to that

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Nehru Centenary and Nehru

P.D. TANDON

Good part of the Nehru Centenary Year has passed by, but not even one outstanding idea has emanated from the Implementation Committee which is supposed to perpetuate the memory of

Jawaharlal Nehru.

The whole affair has come to be mechanically organised by the bureaucracy: issuing of diaries: lighting of 99 lamps at Anand Bhawan on November 14, 1988 by someone who had nothing to do with the freedom struggle; the talk of having the Nehru statues here and there; formal speeches and sermons; the odd radio and TV programme; stamp releasing; officials planting saplings, brushing aside the local presidents of city and district Congress committees; formal release of books on Nehru; the routine floral tributes; organising of camps for writers and artists; and other such humdrum activities. These cannot pass for something really big which will be remembered by generations to come.

About Rs. 300 crore is expected to be squandered on the celebrations in connection with the Nehru Centenary. We would not complain even if ten thousand crore is spent on some gigantic undertaking which will really help the poor and which will be a lasting tribute to Nehru. A lot of money is being spent thoughtlessly and recklessly and this is being widely resented. The voice of resentment may not be audible to the Implementation Committee, but those who have their fingers on the pulse of the people can feel

But why should anyone care about someone like Vijayalakshmi Pandit when Sheila Dixit, a few civil servants and some other chosen ones can manage everything on earth even with their limited brains? May I suggest that the main pillars of the Implementation Committee should, on every Sunday or, at least, once a month, ponder over their cruel casualness and most unimpressive performance in connection with the Nehru Centenary which concerns the whole hation and in which millions of people are emotionally involved.

In 1977 the AICC had organised a freedom struggle exhibition at the Kumbh Mela. During the great Kumbh in January and February 1989, which was visited by nearly two crore people, it was not considered by nearly two crore people, it was not considered advisable by the Implementation Committee or the AICC to put up a big show there about the AICC to put up a big show there about the freedom struggle and Nehru. During the

The author is a distinguished journalist who has been actively associated with political life since the days of the freedom struggle, particularly cularly in UP.

last days of the Kumbh, some persons distributed only a small pamphlet containing what Nehru had written about the Ganga. Instead they should, perhaps have displayed huge portraits of Sheila Dixit, M.L. Fotedar, Ghulam Nabi Azad, Tytler, Pilot and such persons, so that the people would know that

now these are their great leaders!

How haphazardly things are being conducted in most places is evident from the organisers' casual attitudes. One officer in his own city, sent a letter to a person requesting him to participate in a Nehru centenary function, only 200 yards away from the place, on November 14, 1988 in which he wrote: you do make up your mind to come, please acknowledge your acceptance immediately. We will provide you AC sleeper rail fare both ways and daily allowance as per rules. In case you need accommodation too and forego a part of DA, please write to us".

A reply was sent to the officer in which it was stated: "Congratulations for not ignoring the Nehru Centenary. Since there is no train service from...my house to the venue, therefore, the impossibility of my enjoying AC sleeper comforts and the huge

DA may please be generously understood".

In another case an officer wrote to a person to recite his poems at a Nehru Centenary function. In his reply, the invitee wrote: "You have given me a thrill of self-discovery by declaring me a poet. I never had such a thrill before in my life. I am only a writer of some kind of prose. If ever I write a poem I will dedicate it to you". I have not mentioned the names of the officers or the districts because they are not the only ones who have been celebrating Nehru centenary in this manner. The number of such functionaries is legion.

The less said about Doordarshan which is cele-Nehru Centenary under the direct guidance of the Government and the big guns of the Implementation Committee, the better. Normally, I do not watch TV, but once in a while I am forced to give company to my grandson. One day he shouted out: "Come at once and listen to a famous patriotic song". Lata Mangeshkar was singing an immortal song, composed by my good friend Pradeep: "Aiye mere vatan ke logon, zara aankh mein bharlo pani". Once when Nehru had heard it, there were tears in his eyes. But neither Doordarshan nor Lata even once mentioned Pradeep's name. It was a case of unforgivable discourtesy and impropriety. I was depressed by this.

My depression increased when that evening Lata sang: Sarfaroshi ki tamanna ab hamare dil mein hai". I had heard this famous song in the thirties which

had inspired many patriots to stake their all for their site' for installing the statue of country's freedom. Such songs well the stay same by ound a mplex a sulable squahalaya)". those who had a powerful, resounding, manly, and inspiring voice. When the great Lata sang it in a sonorous, melodious and lovely tune, it sounded like a love lyric.

Several times during the last three years it was suggested to the Prime Minister by Nehru's admirers to get documentaries made on Naini Central Jail and Anand Bhawan where Jawaharlal had spent the best years of his life. Rajiv Gandhi appreciated the idea, took interest in the matter, but nothing has been done till now. Someone from Bombay came to Allahabad, about three years ago, with a team, but none knows till today what he did. An IAS officer did visit Naini Central Jail, but what he did about the documentary on this famous prison, we do not know. If the idea had been executed both the documentaries could have been shown on TV during the Nehru Centenary Year.

Nehru believed in genuine work and sincere service of the people. Will the adulatory, routine, (sometimes rotten), programmes comfort his soul? He often used to say that the best way to lead the people was to lead them without giving them the feeling of being led. The Implementation Committee is leading the people to despair and many suffer from the agony of being led by them.

People in Allahabad have been waiting for years for a statue of Nehru at some suitable place. Nothing has been done about it. Angrily an English daily of Allahabad wrote: "A myopic administration added insult to injury by converting the once 'designated

N. C: End of Maoist Monolith

· (Contd. from page 3)

and others in Hong Kong united to demonstrate their solidarity with the Chinese democratic movement. As a result, the deliberations of the basic law (Hong Kong's mini-constitution after 1997) drafting have been indefinitely postponed. A general strike has been called for Wednesday (June 7).

More than one report from Beijing says that it was Deng Xiaoping who personally ordered the army to move against the massive demonstration for democracy while he was in a hospital in an advanced stage of prostrate cancer. The monolith of Mao's communism is crumbling before our very eyes, with the army of legendary fame, meant at one time to liberate the people, being used brutally to crush the most phenomenal upsurge of democracy in the world of recent times. (June 5)

THE situation in Beijing has grown more tense in the last 24 hours and foreign nationals have started leaving the city.

Foreign residents from countries friendly to China say that the gravity of the situation can be gauged from the latest steps taken by the military controlling the city. Warnings are repeatedly being broad. cast that both Chinese citizens and foreigners must stay indoors and not venture out onto the streets. There is heavy concentration of tanks around the diplomatic enclave. And the Chinese Airline services are disrupted presumably because of heavy troop movements. All these point to the probability of uruabyss of colleges otherwise war. [June 6] serious infighting within the armed forces. (Courtesy: The Tim

site' for installing the statue of Panditji into a latrine

Only one Congress MLA was present at Anand Bhawan and Swaraj Bhawan to pay homage to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru on his 99th birth anniversary, reported another newspaper. No MP considered it worth his while to grace the occasion. The programme of several Ministers, who come to Allahabad, was fixed for November 15, and not for November 14. Why? We do not know. Rajendra Kumari Bajpai, Union Minister of State who, for years, used to be a regular visitor to Anand Bhawan during the Prime Ministers' stay there, was conspicuous by her absence.

Sheila Dixit in an interview, published in Amar Ujala (November 15, 1988), declared flamboyantly that "In politics there is nothing right or wrong", I hope she will not direct the Implementation Committee to follow the same approach with regard to the Nehru Centenary celebrations The Committee would be well advised not to confine the Nehru Centenary celebrations to the Congress leaders and government functionaries alone. The active cooperation, suggestion, advice and guidance from men like Achut Patwardhan, Kamalapati Tripathi, H.N. Bahuguna, Chandra Shekhar and Dr Z.A. Ahmed should be sought because they respected Nehru genuinely and are blessed with some vision and ideas.

Mere sycophants, social climbers and civil servants cannot do justice to the man who was a great leader of our times. If the Nehru Centenary celebrations committee is devoid of lofty ideas worthy of Nehru they should seek the help of those who have them. I (Courtesy: The Times of India)

The division within the 34 lakh strong PLA is the most serious development for the integrity of the Chinese state. Even at the height of the turmoil unleashed by the Cultural Revolution, the PLA's solidarity was never breached. Nor could the "gang of four" capture it. Now, by the horrendous decision to stamp out the student-citizen demand for democracy, the dominant section of China's present leadership has destroyed the unity of one of the pillars of the Chinese state.

There is speculation that a conservative die-hard junta of generals got Deng Xiaoping to order this massacre, which was planned as just the opening gambit of an all-scale pogrom against reforms and return to Maoist orthodoxy. Hence, the clamour for democracy is being denounced as a "conspiracy" to install "bourgeois liberalism" — a familiar phrase of communist dogmatists everywhere battling against forces of new thinking. It needs to be noted that when tanks were approaching Tiananmen Square, the student protesters, who pleaded with soldiers not

to fire, were singing the Internationale. There is, however, very little chance of a take over by the primitive hardliners. For one thing, the army itself looks like having been split. Secondly, the Chinese Communist Party is divided with the general secretary of the party, Zhao Ziyang, put aside by hardliners. Thirdly, the 11 year-long economic reforms have created conditions by which it is not possible for China to go back to the Maoist days. The Color of the Color of days. The Cultural Revolution itself failed and to try to repeat it is most likely to lead China into the

(Courtesy: The Times of India)

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Baren Ray: Beijing Massacre Chinese Communist

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defeat and political isolation of the Deng-Li Peng faction was thus fairly complete in the period since

the Sino-Soviet summit.

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It is against this political paralysis (and humiliation which he took as a personal loss of face), imposed by a 'minority' in the Party hierarchy but enjoying the vast support of millions of common people including Party cadres, that the venerable (but now the main target of resignation demands) Deng Xiaoping, the Chairman of the most powerful Supreme Military Council, took some special steps a little over a week ago. The ailing supremo made a secret visit to Wuhan for a conclave with the majority of the PLA's seniormost Commanders, where the prudent caution of the Commanders in Beijing was reversed after much effort. An exhausted Deng had to be hospitalised immediately on return. But the PLA Commanders' agreement was in the bag. The fight for the soul of the PLA Commanders (a major battleground in all inner-Party struggles of recent years) had been temporarily won. Even after that a full week was allowed to pass for making failsafe preparations till the tanks began to roll after the midnight of Saturday.

Throughout this week the Party/government warning statements were becoming increasingly bold and arrogant. But strangely enough they did not harp on the one note most expected, namely that the pro-democracy movement was instigated by the Western imperialist powers. But this was entirely understandable. It would have been very embarrasing for the Deng leadership which for years had advocated military alliance with the USA for resisting alleged 'hegemonist' threats from the Soviet Union and even during the summit with Gorbachev had timed the visit of the US Navy to China and the goodwill visit of Wan Li, Speaker of China's parliament, to the USA, to speak too loudly of any evil contamination emanating from the West, particularly the USA. Instead, the recurrent propaganda theme was the 'minority' character of the movement, the "very small number of people" supporting it, and causing social anarchy, etc. (The "counter-revolutionary" and "foreign hand" theory came much later, perhaps and "foreign hand" theory came much later, perhaps as an afterthought.)

How has the world reacted to this enormous monstrosity? Most shockingly, Dr Henry Kissinger, one of the arch ideologues of US imperialism and fully supplied with all the information gathered by its secret services, wrote an article before the event that almost anticipated its tragic trajectory the article was, significantly, reproduced in The the self-dia of Sunday, June 4, 1989). It bemoaned the self-dia of Sunday, June 4, 1989). the self-contradictory nature of Deng's position and yet where the self-contradictory nature of Deng's position and benegative was its conclusion? That regrettable though Deng's decision was, nevertheless, in the likely event of new confrontation with the USSR, the USA and the West must retain China on their side, and

hence must now support the Chinese leadership. The CPSU leadership is faced with a difficult Political dilemma. It has just normalised its relations with tions with the People's Republic of China and the

Chinese Communist Party after strenuous efforts of many years. That inter-state and inter-party normalisation was also a normalisation of Marxism back from the many serious and even criminal distortions to which Marxism-in-practice had been subjected to. A part of that abnormality or distortion was the hierarchical basis of relations between the Communist Parties of different countries. It was quite apt therefore that the summit Joint Statement declared that the relations between the two Parties must be on the basis of full independence and noninterference. But there were other and even more serious distortions in 'existing socialism' which were being rectified and the situation brought back to normal. The Gorbachev leadership is justly applauded round the world precisely for the measures it has taken in that direction. It has been doing everything possible to improve upon its human rights and democratic credentials at home. It has categorically declared that no Party/state hierarchy should have the right to take precipitate action against the declared will of the majority of the population in the name of communism or under any other excuse, much less take military action against a peaceful population.

The principle of democratic centralism frequently evoked in justification of Party unity or discipline becomes totally irrelevant and out of date when Communists assume the role of the single ruling party. When differences then arise among the ruling elite the correct way out naturally will be to refer the issue to the people. Suitable executive decision can then be taken on the basis of the people's verdict. The 'right' of a narrow mechanical majority to silence the rest of the Party on vital matters affecting millions upon millions of people and their future is totally absurd and must be formally abjured

by existing socialism.

But the issue of fundamental human rights anywhere cannot be secluded by recourse to legalistic arguments of the internal affairs of a country,

A special responsibility rests today upon all those throughout the world who call themselves or are known as Communists. The CPC Party/government leadership has called the despicable action that it has forced the PLA to perform as a "glorious victory" of communism. Communists everywhere must clear the good name of communism from this shame. The record of the leaders of the Third World is no cleaner. They too are loath to condemn too strongly the actions of a 'legitimate' government against its own people, however brutal, unjustifiable and repulsive that action, lest such a condemnation be tantamount to their surrendering their own right to take strong action against their own people should the need arise.

But this is an altogether intolerable situation on eve of the last decade of the twentieth century. The peoples of the world must act to ensure that no government or regime, however powerful and no matter under which system, ever has the power to act in this way against its people. The right to kill its own people is not the inalienable right of any government. The tragedy at Tiananmen Square calls for a new common action by mankind. Above all, by the Communists of the world. [] (June 6)

Kothari: Techno-Capitalism

(Contd. from page 8).

until the Atlantic alliance held sway. Similarly, the NIC phenomenon within the developing world threatens to undermine what remains of the old vision of a 'Third Way' based on the non-aligned movement on the one hand, and the challenge posed by the G-77, NIEO, OPEC and other radicalised assertions of the Third World on the other.

The point is that non-alignment (a concept to which some movements in the North have also got attracted) is meaningless unless it also pursues and promotes the path of self-reliant development both for the state and for various constituents of people that constitute the state, taking the self regard, honour and dignity in the idea of not joining any power bloc down to the populace as a whole, especially the more marginalised and oppressed sections thereof, thereby putting an end to the contradiction between the rhetoric of freedom and autonomy in the international arena and the reality of hegemonical structures of governance, development and culture at home - from which a majority of the NAM governments seem to suffer. Similarly, the democratic and demilitarised assertions of countries like France and Japan should not prevent us from seeing that the various agreements and collaborations that they enter into with leading Third World countries are in fact meant to perpetuate structures of domination and control that techno-capitalism stands for. While pragmatically there may be a basis for welcoming the economic outcome of a de-escalation of the arms race, will the new leaders of at least some of the Third World countries have the foresight -an insight - to turn away from the perilous paths that unthinkingly economism and technologism (together undermining political visions everywhere)

We are all beholden to Gorbachev and the new global politics that he has embarked upon, hopefully lowering the thresholds of military build-ups and the opening up of possibilities on newer thresholds like human rights and dismantling of regional hegemonies (as, for example, in Afghanistan or Kampuchea). All we are keen to be assured at the same time is that this, and the accompanying rethinking at the normative and ideological plane, does not create a situation in which socially marginalised segments of the human population are further left undefended and possibly exposed to the fundamental Western technocratic version of 'survival of the fittest'. The global paradigm of integration and exclusion - integration of systems and exclusion of peoples and cultures seems to be entering its most problematic and possibly pernicious phase as we move into the last decade before the dawn of the 21 century.

All these issues take on more basic and dramatic forms when perceived in the context of domestic. settings of centralised governments versus the marginalised peoples, minorities and nationalities. The rhetoric of militarism versus democracy often hides the deeper conflict between democratic struggles waged from the grassroots and 'representative'

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chemnatan profession high-tech and computerised manipulations of the mass mind, information systems promoting surveillance and secrecy while talk ing of the new communications revolution, or new forms of managerial control steered by university educated social scientists. The basic point is that as far as the masses are concerned, there is no difference between the militarism of military regimes and technological control exercised by formally 'democratic' regimes. Indeed, it is possible to argue that a high tech based managerial order under the garb of a democratic government may be more difficult to fight against than an openly repressive military regime.

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Many issues of the deeper springs of human liberation entailed in the current phase of the human enterprise get thrown up by these sets of questions. There is no space here to go in detail into all of them: I have tried to wrestle with them in some of my recent writings of late (some of them in Alter-

natives).5

PERHAPS the most interesting aspect of the emerging global convergence of norms has been the growing consensus on one key value: democracy. It is a value that is no longer dismissed as, belonging to the 'superstructure' rather than the 'base' nor is it any longer tossed around in a conceptual war of nerves: people's democracy versus bourgeois democracy. All over the world, and not the least in the Third World, people's aspirations and the diverse movements and struggles through which they are expressed, accept the one common label of their being democratic. In the political arena itself, and again in particular in the Third World, the struggles for democratisation and redemocratisation are on the upswing. And yet, probably the most disheartening aspect of the liberal democratic regimes that have either been in power for long (India and Sri Lanka Columbia and Venezuela) or have of late get rid of dictatorial regimes and come to power with massive popular backing (Brazil and Argentina, Philippines and Pakistan) is the ease with which they have been subjected to global corporate penetration and their willing integration into the world economic, strategic and technological markets. Further more — and this is fairly recent — as the rising democratic spirit everywhere has upset earlier models of global management, the latter have responded by welcoming these changes (a la Philip pines or Pakistan where they had till yesterday backed martial law regimes) but ensuring two things: continuation of strategic toe-holds and underlining new regional hegemonical structures that are then broadly accepted as natural alignments through which the management of power and resources can be organised.

Countries like India face a series of dilemmas in respect of democratic movements in its vicinity. On the one hand, movements for democratisation, as took place recently in Pakistan, call for all-round support, all the way from the government and the ruling party to Opposition parties and various grassroots movements. On the other hand, the emerging

well become available for acceptance of India's pivotal role on the one hand and, gradually thereintegration into the liberal international establishment through financial, technological and trade collaborations on the other, mediated and facilitated by the dominant international framework of financial and development agencies. Something similar is likely to be attempted as the democratic mass movements in Burma, South Korea and elsewhere get channelised into the new regional geo-

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politics of transnational management. It would be a jaundiced view to take if one did not throw in one's lot with the various movements for democratisation and redemocratisation globally, usually along the framework provided by Western liberal democracies. And yet, one has learnt over time how so many liberal democracies have promoted dualist structures arising from integration of the upper deciles into a growing world middle class and exclusion of the rest to become the world's underclass. The latter consists of the rural poor, ethnic minorities and peripheral nationalities, the women pushed out by modern technology, the communities displaced by large development projects and various other victims of the long historical process that began with the colonial expansion of Europe in the various continents of the Third World. Moreover, with such a divide engulfing one society after another, there is likely to be 'ecocide' on a large scale, undermining the resource endowments of these countries, particularly of their rural hinterlands, tribal populations and the poor generally.

Somewhat similar consequences have also followed seemingly radical demands for a new international economic order, promoting greater transfer of technologies, and with such transfers, collaboration with transnational corporations for modernising domestic economies, raising exports and using foreign exchange surpluses built through migrant labour and the brain drain for making good the technological lag from which these countries have been (above all by their own scientists) they suffer. Unless utmost vigilance is exercised, similar tendencies are likely to get a fillip following the chain of regional reconciliations (India and China, India and Pakistan, Vietnam, Kampuchea and Thailand, in Western Sahara, or on the issue of Cyprus) sponsored by one or the other of the superpowers. The moving spirit that has provided a rationale for many of these has been the same: making good one's technological lag, releasing resources for modernisation, getting integrated into the global framework of inter-dependence.

IT is in these newly emerging contexts of global and regional changes — and their domestic reflections that new interventions from the bottom will positive take place, building no doubt on the Positive forces that have been generated by the New Detente and making use of the breathing space and time provided by the same, but at the same time waging struggle against distortions of the same

framework of regional cooperationgit SALAR (a) Samay ound an income available for acceptance of India's acceptance of India's urgent need to generate counter-tendencies for a more fundamental realignment of forces that would utilise the new opportunities for putting an end to a world structure that continues to be dualistic when considered from the point of view of large masses of the people — all round the world but particularly in societies that have all along been victimised by the course of history. Philosophically speaking, there is the whole big issue of pragmatic ratity of a given 'system' contending against deeper incorrigible, instransigent and vindicative structures of interest. Incapacity to take full cognisance of the latter while pinning faith in the sudden openings provided by a new kind of world leadership can make us feel good but it is not likely to prepare us for producing a better world.

The dualist world structure with which this paper is fundamentally concerned has, no doubt, been a result of interlocking between a number of dimensions of which the crowning variable was militarisation and the global arms race. Any stepping away from the precipice to which this one factor was leading the world cannot but be welcomed by all of us. It is the most important first step in the direction of global transformation and the creation of a better world. But unless it is followed by other major steps and unless it is prevented to be swallowed and coopted by dominant structures of prevailing global status quo, we are once again likely to misread symptomatic changes as being transformative and regenerative.

We have reached a situation in which dominant perceptions of human prospects (as found in global think-tanks) have for long been moving from early optimism about possibilities of human welfare and well being to a pessimistic scenario in which concerns of security against the forces of revolt seem to be overtaking the erstwhile paradigm of 'development'.5 It was part of such a primacy of the isssue of security - against international terrorism, against mass revolts from the lower classes, against the encroachment of the world peripheries - that militarisation had been so pervasive a factor. It of course over-shot itself. Hence the effort to deescalate. But unless we recognise the full bearing of this scenario and evolve our steps accordingly, we are bound to be once again caught napping.

FOOTNOTES

- 1. This is taken from the famous "Gorbachev thesis" propounded in the Report of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the Great October Revolution.
- Op. Cit.
 Mikhail Gorbachev, Perestroika: New Thinking for Our Country and The World (London: Collins, 1987).
- 5. See in particular 'On Humane Governance', Alternatives, Vol. XII, No. 3, July 1987. This and other related essays have been published in State Against Democracy: In Search of Humane Governance and Transformation and Survival: In Search of Humane World Order (New Delhi: Ajanta).
- 6. I discussed this in some detail in my Fulbright Memorial Lecture, "Democracy in the Third World", delivered at Princeton University in 1987 and published in State Against Democracy: In Search of Humane Governance, op. cit.

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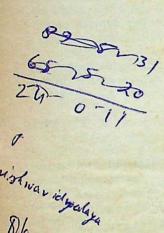
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POLITICAL NOTEBOOK

Benazir in Washington

Benazir Bhutto's first official visit to the US after being elected Prime Minister in the wake of Pakistan's return to democracy has been a signal success for her personally as well as from the stand-point of her country's national interests. It was essentially a public relations exercise that Benazir indulged in following her cordial reception in the US capital. On his part President Bush drove home the point that with democracy restored in Pakistan, US-Pak relations have been further reinforced on the foundations of shared values.

Speaking in Washington, Benazir observed: "Over the last ten years, Pakistan has been in the forefront of two great struggles. We have actively supported the cause of the Afghan people in their brave fight against foreign military intervention and, at the same time, at home in Pakistan we struggled against military dictatorship to establish a system based upon democratic values and respect for human rights. In both these epic struggles, we received from the United States unwavering support and material as well as moral encouragement."

Elaborating on the same theme, she declared in her address to the joint session of the US Congress: "Our shared interests and common international goals have not disappeared; if anything, they have been strengthened. Our partnership is not a friendship of convenience. For decades we have been tied together by mutual international goals and by shared interests. But something new has entered into the equation of bilateral relations — democracy. We are now moral as well as political partners, two elected Governments bonded together in a common respect for constitutional government, accountability and a commitment to freedom."

George Bush responded with equal warmth: "Our goals are great goals, worthy goals. And together, our countries have already done much. And in particular, let me simply salute your role in Pakistan's return to democracy. (applause) It was the great Pakistani philosopher, poet-philosopher, Mohammed Iqbal, who once observed simply, 'Love is freedom and honour.' And Madam Prime Minister, your entire life shows the meaning of those words."

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Nevertheless, the commitment to democracy on the part of the Pakistan Government headed by Benazir has added a new dimension to US-Pak collaboration. It has imparted greater vigour and strength to the relationship without the odium of hypocrisy inherent in the White House's backing of a regime bereft of popular legitimacy as has been the case of Pakistan for long years. Benazir's US visit helped to bring this out in sharper relief than at any time in the recent past.

India must take a broad view of this development. From the Indian perspective this stress on democracy is of vital importance. After all, India remains the world's largest democracy and the renewed validity of democracy in our region, as highlighted during Benazir's US visit, carries considerable weight in this part of the world, far beyond the realm of the

rhetorical pronouncements.

But the visit was not confined to such pronouncements. It facilitated the finalisation of a 620 million dollar worth US military and security related economic assistance to Pakistan for 1990. What is more, Brent Scowcraft, the National Security Adviser to the President, announced that a deal wherein Washington is to supply an additional quantum of 60 F-16 aircraft to Islamabad is almost through awaiting only Congressional approval. This was a clear indication that the US continues to ignore Pakistan's feverish search for attaining nuclear weapons capability as strategic considerations matter more than anything else in the White House's calculations.

Only last February, Jamshed K. Marker, the Pakistani Ambassador to the US, had revealed in Washington that Pakistan was on the "threshold"

Academics on Beijing Massacre

Socialism is indistinguishable from humanism and liberation. The quality of socialism is its identification with the people and not its imposition through the smell of gunpowder even though of red colour. We are aghast at this use of brutal force in China against an unarmed and largely peaceful populace. We call upon leaders of the Chinese Communist Party to curb its headlong race towards militarism and naked authoritarianism and to revert to the former traditions of the CCP of the 1930s and 1940s of becoming one with the people and both guiding them as well as being guided by them. The threat of militarism and civil war cannot be faced without opening a dialogue with the students and the Chinese people and taking steps towards civil liberty and democracy.

V.P. Dutt, Bipan Chandra, Krishna Bharadwaj, C.P. Bhambri, Gargi Dutt, Yogendra Singh, Satish Kumar

June 7

Centre for Historical Studies, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi-110067 what India had been claiming for a considerable length of time. Benazir did not use the same language as Marker and instead affirmed that Pakistan was committed to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. However, suspicions of Pakistan's motives were strengthened by her rejection of Bush's call for an on-the-spot inspection of Pakistan's nuclear installations. In the same breath she spoke of a regional nuclear pact with India, something the US administration has been plugging for long.

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India's position on the subject is well known; it desires a global regime of nuclear disarmament as a regional nuclear pact without China, the only nuclear weapon power in Asia, has no meaning whatsoever.

However, what is necessary for India at this stage is to come out with a comprehensive proposal to counter Benazir's public relations exercise on the nuclear issue. India has all along opposed the plan to curb horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons while the superpowers allow vertical proliferation of such weapons in the nuclear weapon states. Now that Gorbachev has initiated bold steps to strike at the root of vertical proliferation, a comprehensive proposal could be put forward by India on how best to strengthen the security of South Asian states in the nuclear sphere within the parameters of global disarmament (instead of a piecemeal regional approach). This would have an additional merit of suggesting a serious dialogue without the PR value of one-upmanship that is attached to Benazir's offer enjoying Bush's blessings.

While continuing to charge the US with casting a blind eye to Pakistan's attempts to acquire nuclear weapons technology (it is just two screw driver turns away from detonation) as is being done periodically, New Delhi needs to seriously undertake the task of formulating such a proposal in the true Gorbachev spirit if it is determined to burst the PR bubble asso-

ciated with Benazir's offer.

ON the Afghan situation Benazir's call for a political solution did not escape the attention of close observers of the Pak-Afghan scene. This came close on the heels of her decision to terminate the services of General Hamid Gul as the chief of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and replace him by Zia-ul Haq were well known. It was on account of General Hamid Known. of General Hamid Gul's benevolence that the fundamentalist leader of the Afghan mujahideen, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, became the main beneficiary of external support to the Afghan rebels. The latest developments (Benazir's pronounce ments have been greeted by no less a person than Afghan President Dr Najibullah) indicate a slight shift in Parazir's slight shift in Benazir's approach in favour of the moderate robel moderate rebel groups. There are also reports of a general assessment general assessment of both Benazir and the Pentagon that an Out of both Benazir and the Pentagon that an Out of Both Benazir and the Pentagon that an Out of Both Benazir and the Pentagon that an Out of Both Benazir and the Pentagon that an Out of Both Benazir and the Pentagon that are out of Both Benazir and the Both Be tagon that an outright mujahideen victory in Afghanistan is next to stan is next to impossible. Hence the talk of a political solution (although Benazir is prepared to pursue the military pursue the military option for the next few months, that is, upto September 1989).

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On the whole, Benazir's visit should be analysed in dialogue between the moderate rebels and the the correct perspective. The US extended full support to Benazir. But there is no guarantee that it would not help her detractors and opponents too. It would thus like to keep her in a state of semistability and enhance her vulnerability so that she is compelled to rely fully on the US. No doubt Benazir is functioning under tremendous constraints. And yet she has displayed a moderate degree of political skill and agility to carve out a path that is distinct from her predecessor (even if on the nuclear issue this has not become evident till date) and helps to promote Pakistan's independence and self-reliance.

It is thus incumbent on India to tread carefully and not do anything that weakens Benazir's position. On Afghanistan, India must singlemindedly work towards strengthening the moderate mujahideen, facilitating the return of King Zahir Shah and opening a

Kabul Government (conforming to the aspirations of the Pakistani public). On bilateral relations with Pakistan, India's national interests demand a regular voicing of concern over the negative consequences of the US-Pak strategic relationship like Washington's continued rearming of Islamabad even after the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, and despite the Pak search for the 'bomb'. At the same time, a more positive approach to irritants and obstacles (as is transparent from the line being pursued on the Siachen problem) is likely to yield rich dividends in terms of sub-continental stability as well as national security in the long run.

The element of trust so necessary for durable Indo-Pak ties can be fostered at the popular level

through such moves.

June 14

Sumit Chakravartty

COMMENTARY

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BJP-Shiv Sena Tie-up

K. ADVANI, the BJP President, has been repeatedly saying that the Rajiv Government being the worst that India has had since independence every effort should be made to pull it down in the next general elections. It appeared therefore that the BJP was serious in ensuring straight contests against the Congress-I in the Lok Sabha poll. But it has now itself queered the pitch by declaring its intention for seat adjustments with the Shiv Sena in Maharashtra.

The Shiv Sena's transparent sectarian, chauvinist and communal outlook has been reiterated in a lecent court judgement. No doubt there is a strong opinion among secular organisations and individuals that regards the BJP also as a communal force. However, the presence of leaders of the stature of A.B. Vajpayee (whom the party has projected as its nominee for Prime Ministership) in the party leadership has sought to impart to it a liberal image. But is electoral alliance with the Shiv Sena will deal a shattering blow to that image. The party is of course teady to leady to face such a consequence as, it feels, this development would endear it to the growing army of Hindu communalists (whose number is on the rise due to the spurt in Muslim fundamentalism and who follow the Sena in Maharashtra). Thus the BJP, if its Palow the Sena in Maharashtra) any if its Palampur National Executive meeting is any indicator, is once again in the process of transforming itself into the Jana Sangh whose communal dentity identify was beyond dispute (as it had in its fold Such arch, ardent and articulate proponents of the Hindu rashtra' thesis as Prof Balraj Madhok).
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The BJP has come out in its true colours. But decision has come out in its true colours. decision of the Palampur meet for electoral alliance with the Shiv Sena will cause maximum

embarrassment to the Janata Dal whose chief V.P. Singh is on record having precluded any truck with the BJP in case it opts for an understanding with the Sena. It needs to be seen how V.P. Singh adjusts himself to the new reality. However, what is more important is the credence this latest event gives to the charge by the Left parties that the BJP being the front organisation of the RSS (today it is increasingly turning into the RSS mouthpiece) whose sarsanghchalak had called for support to Rajiv Gandhi not so long ago, it would eventually adopt measures that facilitate a Congress-I victory at the hustings.

This is the time when secular parties in the Opposition have to prove their bonafides. Removal of Rajiv Gandhi from power at the cost of principles and secular values would amount to rank opportunism no less despicable than the opportunistic postures of the ruling party at the Centre to garner votes by pandering to both majority and minority

communalism.

'Charvak

June 14

Readers, please note

The article of Rajni Kothari "The New Detente: Triumph of Techno-Capitalism" published in Mainstream (June 10, 1989) has raised certain vital issues. Readers are invited to participate in a discussion on the contents of the article in the columns of Mainstream.

-Editor

MAINSTREAM June 17, 1989

Mujahideen Atrocities on Women

TAHIRA MAZHAR ALI

Following is the speech delivered by Tahira Mazhar Ali, General Secretary of Democratic Women's Association (DWA) of Pakistan, at the Ghaffar Khan Peace Conference in Peshawar (May 24-27, 1989).

KHAN Abdul Ghaffar Khan dedicated his life and work to the principle and deep conviction of non-violence. He raised an army of lakhs of people devoted to the cause of peace and brotherhood and the fight against British imperialism. He was undoubtedly the greatest freedom fighter we have had, who never compromised on principle. He understood his people and participated in their sorrows and

He says: "I consider it a crime to be a slave, therefore until we establish in this country a true people's government under which every community secures equal opportunities for expansion, you will find me struggling for freedom no matter who domi-

nates the scene.'

He further conveys his conviction as follows:

have one great desire.

I want to rescue these gentle, brave, patriotic people from the tyranny of the foreigners who have disgraced and dishonoured them

I want to create for them a world of freedom where they can live in peace, where they can laugh and be happy.

I want to kiss the ground where their ruined houses once

stood, before they were destroyed by savage strangers. I want to take the broom and sweep the alleys and the lanes, and I want to clean their houses with my own hands. I want to wash away the stains of blood from their

I want to show the world how beautiful they are, these people from the hills, and then I want to proclaim "show me if you can any gentler, more courteous, more cultured

people than these.

Today once again our country is being ravaged, once again our borders are simmering, and once again we are being used to damage and destroy our own people for the sake of foreign powers. American policies are ruinous. They have no respect for our blood - but atleast our own government should save us from the destructive policies of the past 11

years of dictatorship.

The political process of 'Islamisation' initiated by Zia-ul-Haq was a complete deception. Under this process, rituals were manipulated to pose as the real Islam, and misinterpreted as a 'complete social and economic system.' In real practice, these rituals were used to promote the interests of the ruling class, destroy popular democratic institutions and deprive the working classes of their rights. Under the cover of Islamisation, genuine concepts of democracy, equality, truth, justice and welfare were converted into false concepts and ideas of 'Islamic democracy, Islamic economy, Islamic state, Islamic science and Islamic banking.', Dictatorship posed as democracy, exploitation as equality, cowardice as courage and falsehood as truth. All moral scales were reversed.

Hypocrisy and falsehood reigned supreme. The rulers interpreted the Quran and the Prophet to suit their own interests and situations.

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Misinterpretation of Islam was used to undermine the status of women, lash innocent victims who opposed Martial Law and imprison those who

refused to bow their heads before a tyrant.

American strategic interests coined the word jihad and with Zia and the CIA planned the downfall of the PDPA regime in Afghanistan, and forecast a mujahideen victory in which Pakistan would seat its candidate on the throne, allowing Zia to become the overall ruler. People were misled by this misinformation, and those who daily planted CIA reports in the world press began believing their own lies. America protected all of Zia's atrocities, and all mujahideen atrocities - but now they have second thoughts because Jalalabad has not fallen, Najibullah has not been overthrown, the Afghan Government's army has not walked over to the mujahideen, and it has been proved by recent events that the misinformation campaign only destroyed their own credi-

bility and convinced only themselves.

In recent shameful events women were captured, raped and converted into slaves by some mujahideen The women captured by these groups are groups. reduced to becoming slave prostitutes, hostels, and some through temporary marriages This is only the latest in horror stories from the front. Others regarding the public auction of women and stoning to death of people by Afghans in Pakistan have surfaced from time to time. We fear that as the Afghan civil war intensifies, such atrocities will increase. These atrocities have taken place all along, but were covered up by the CIA, the American administration and the Zia regime. Now that we have a woman Prime Minister, we hope she will look into these matters, stop these atrocities and ensure that those responsible are immediately deport ed back to their countries. The Arabs who have come to defend the jihad should go back and defend the Palestinians against Israel — they are much closer, and the cause is much greater.

All women's organisations have sent letters to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Amnesty International, the Red Cross in Geneva and to Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, the Prime Minister of Pakinton ter of Pakistan, condemning the horrendous violation

of human rights.

Just a couple of months back, virtually every newsroom in the US was looking forward eagerly to (Continued on page 32)

China and Sino-Soviet Summit

C. RAJA MOHAN

that came to the fore during Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to China. Gorbachev went to Beijing determined to put the state-to-state relations with China on a "normal" basis, in tune with the universally accepted principles of non-interference and peaceful coexistence. Correcting the deformations of the past when the relations between the two socialist states were poisoned by ideological disputes and claims on monopoly of truth by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Chinese Communist Party was a major objective of Gorbachev.

Greatest Upheaval

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Yet, Gorbachev's arrival in Beijing triggered, the greatest upheaval in the history of People's Republic of China. Although the Chinese students came into the streets demanding democracy after the death of the former General Secretary, Hu Yaobang, and drew inspiration from the 70th anniversary of the May 4 Movement, it was Gorbachev's presence that served as a catalyst in transforming the students' agitation into a mass upsurge. The projection of Gorbachev as their hero by the Chinese students was acutely embarrassing to both the Soviet leader and his Chinese hosts. To his credit, Gorbachev managed to walk the tight rope, at once endorsing the importance of political reform and cautioning against expectations of overnight change.

The Summit, while defining a new basis for the telationship on the principles of panchsheel, also demonstrated the interactive influence of the internal developments in the socialist states. The Chinese and the Russians, moving along different paths towards socialist renewal, are smitten by mutual envy. The abundance of consumer goods and food products in China reminds the Soviets of their own faltering economic reform. The new openness, democratisation and the excitement of the Soviet intellecual life under Gorbachev have provided a fatal attraction to the Chinese students and intellectuals chafing under the oppressive Chinese political culture. culture. For all their efforts at disengaging from the Past, China and the Soviet Union as the world's two largest socialist states and neighbours are condemned

to influence each other's internal development. Disentangling the relationship from the historical burden and the de-ideologisation of the inter-state ties disource accompanied by a revival of the ideological disourse between the two Communist Parties. The major outcome at Beijing. The relations between the CPSLY the CPSU and the CCP are to be based, as the Sino-Soviet Joint Communique states, on the "principles indent Communique states, on the principles of indent Communique states, on the principles indentification of inde of independence, full equality, mutual respect and non-interference in domestic affairs." This is a

A NY assessment of the first Sino-Soviet Summit in recognition of the reality of pervasive pluralism in the international communist movement and the first the international communist movement and the final burial of the earlier insistence on the monopoly of truth. Through the 1980s the CCP and CPSU have disengaged from the bitter polemics of the past. The two parties now recognise that they may have much to learn from each other in traversing the uncharted and uncertain course of socialist reform.

Political Imperative

For the CCP and CPSU the need to cooperate has become a political imperative. In some states such as Hungary and Poland there has been a massive erosion of the political authority of the communist party and it is inevitable that they move towards more pluralistic political structures. But in China and the Soviet Union communism remains the main legitimising force for the state and there is no political alternative to the communist party. (The agitating Chinese students were clearly looking towards liberal sections in the Chinese Communist Party in the quest for democracy). All reform and restructuring in China and the Soviet Union would have to be within the framework of the dominance of the Communist Party. As they grapple with a profoundly altered world since the war, and struggle to reorganise the domestic political and economic structures, the CCP and CPSU are condemned to cooperate, although the framework of such cooperation is bound to be radically different from that of the 1950s.

The Sino-Soviet Summit has dramatised the ironic predicaments of the current Chinese leadership. For Deng Xiaoping, the sole important survivor of the Sino-Soviet schism since the late 1950s, the visit of Gorbachev, ready to be duly deferential to the senior Chinese leader and willing to accept some blame for the Sino-Soviet rift, was to be a personal triumph. At a time when the world leaders were falling over each other to meet Gorbachev, Deng was the only one who insisted on preconditions for a dialogue with him. The moment of triumph also appears to be the undoing of the exalted status Deng has enjoyed over the last decade in China. His role in getting China out of the Maoist quagmire and generating a new prosperity is indeed heroic. Yet the sense in China today that Deng has outlived his historic role is palpable.

The Contrast

The current Chinese leadership has agreed to the normalisation of relations between Beijing and Moscow, but is clearly unwilling to let the detente move on a much faster track, whether in bilateral relations or on international issues. The contrast between the calculated formalism of the Chinese leadership and the open, engaging and visionary leadership of Gorbachev was clearly evident during

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integral to a larger strategy of restructuring international relations towards a cooperative framework. For the Chinese leadership, the normalisation of relations with Moscow is a calculated manoeuvre in the practice of "balance of power" politics. The crude move of inviting the US Seventh Fleet to Shanghai the very day Gorbachev was scheduled to be in the city revealed the Chinese desire to signal that Beijing is not cuddling up to Moscow.

The Sino-Soviet joint Communique reveals the divergence between the comprehensive approach to international relations and the narrowly conceived slogan of "independent foreign policy" adopted by the current Chinese leadership. In the Communique the two sides outline their respective positions. The Soviet Union declares that its foreign policy "consistently seeks genuine disarmament, including nuclear disarmament, believes that the security of no state can be ensured at the expense of others, and favours the priority of universally shared values and the peaceful competition of different socio-economic systems in conditions of freedom of choice and balance of interests". The Chinese side simply reaffirms its "independent foreign policy of peace" and of "not forming alliances with any country".

Limited cooperation

Clearly the Chinese side is not willing to endorse Gorbachev's campaign for a nuclear weapon-free world, and is in no mood to indicate any significant foreign policy cooperation with the Soviet Union. The only global issues on which China is prepared to extend support to the Soviet Union are: "increasing the authority" of the United Nations, in which both the countries are permanent members of the Security Council; concern over the growing gap between North and South; and the "urgent need to establish a new international economic order."

On regional issues too Beijing remains wary of moving towards any coordination with Moscow. The only agreement has been the joint declaration that "neither the Soviet Union nor China lays claim to hegemony in any form in the Asia-Pacific region or in other parts of the world." While Gorbachev was once again eloquent about the need for peace and cooperation in the Asia-Pacific and the impor-tance of initiating an "all Asian" process, the Chinese side is obviously reluctant to endorse even in a perfunctory manner the Soviet approach to Asian security.

Ambiguous Position

A surprising absence in the Joint Communique was any reference to the "reunification of the Korean peninsula". Given the good relations the two sides have with North Korea and the improving contacts of Moscow and Beijing with the South, this is an interesting omission. In his public speech at Beijing, Gorbachev reaffirmed his unwavering support" to the peaceful, democratic reunification" of Korea. He urged the "defusing of the tensions on the peninsula and the withdrawal of the US troops" and suggested that the "arguments in favour of

the summit. For Gorbachev, his China Aransayaj Soundation the chapters and these troops in the region have long ceased to be justified." The ambiguity of the Chinese position since the late 1970s of opposing foreign military presence in Afghanistan and Cambodia but keeping silent on American military presence in Japan, Korea and the Philippines - is of course well-known.

Only a little less surprising has been the absence of any reference to Afghanistan in the Joint Communique. While Gorbachev was openly critical in Beijing of Pakistan's role in Afghanistan, China would not allow itself even to call for the effective implementation of the Geneva Agreements.

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Moscow and Beijing devoted much space in their Joint Communique to explaining their divergent views on the Cambodian settlement. The widespread expectation that, in the wake of the Vietnamese decision to withdraw unilaterally from Cambodia, the two sides would resolve their differences did not materialise. The main difficulty remains the Chinese insistence that the genocidal Khmer Rouge be incorporated into a transitional government. The Hun Sen Government in Cambodia, Vietnam and the Soviet Union are ready to accept them into a mechanism of national reconciliation but not into the government. It is tragic that in spite of the current Chinese isolation in supporting the Khmer Rouge. they are not prepared to change course.

Demilitarising Border

On bilateral relations too, it was largely left to Gorbachev to dwell on the full potential of Sino-Soviet normalisation, while the Chinese leadership remained cautious and tentative. The Soviet leader outlined his vision of demilitarising the Sino-Soviet border and transforming it into a zone of peace and good-neighbourliness. He went beyond outlining the details of his unilateral troop cut announced at the United Nations last December. Besides the unilateral cuts of 200,000 troops in the eastern USSR -12divisions of ground forces, 11 air force regiments and 16 battleships - Gorbachev called for the comprehensive demilitarisation of the Sino-Soviet border. The Joint Communique states that the two sides "have agreed to take measures to reduce the armed forces in the area of the Sino-Soviet border to minimum in line with normal, neighbourly relations." But it fails short of referring to the idea of a joint group to discuss the principles of such bilateral cuts, suggested by Eduard Shevardnadze during his visit to China in February.

In resolving the border dispute the expected announcement of at least a partial settlement on the east did not materalise. The two sides have declared their intention to speed up the process by elevating it to the ministerial level. But they identify the need for a fair and rational settlement, "relying on the treaties on the present Sino-Soviet border and the universally account of the line of universally accepted standards of international law, and in the spirit of equitable consultations, mutual understanding and flexibility".

Clearly, there were no dramatic breakthroughs at the summit, barring the agreement to reduce the troops on the border. The Chinese leadership has (Continued on page 34)

Contours of China Crisis

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THE contours of the emerging set-up in China are still very blurred as the country is yet to recover from the searing shock of the ghastly massacre at Tiananmen Square on the Black Sunday of June 4 while those in authority have started their purge and persecution in their so-called crusade against counter-As such, the review of the shattering revolution. happenings has to wait until the picture becomes

clearer and the high tension subsides.

However, certain broad trends are discernible which perhaps provide the clue to what went wrong. Despite the claim made by the Chinese authorities and China-watchers all these years, it is now becoming clear that the legendary Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has lost its elan as well as its moral authority. The recovery after the body-blow suffered during the Cultural Revolution has been only formal in the last decade-and-a-half since the ouster of the Gang of Four. The moral stature which the Chinese Communists commanded before the masses has been eroded as careerism and corruption became rampant, It has been common talk in China in recent years that corruption pervaded all tiers of the ruling hierarchy. The stories about the exploits of Deng Xiaoping's son, Deng Pufang, rival those of Brezhnev's son-in-law. Even at the provincial level, corruption became rampant both in the Party and the government. The Department of Foreign Trade became a byword for kickbacks. There was, therefore, a genuine ground for widespread mass discontent over corruption which the students focussed in their pro-democracy campaign.

Secondly, the authority of the government as distinct from the Party has never been very marked in the traditional Communist set-up, because the Party is regarded as the fountain of power, the more so in China. The vulnerability of the government in the case of China was compounded by the fact that Prime Minister Li Peng, though known for his technocratic competence, has had no mass image except as one of the adopted sons of Chou Enlai. He came to limelight in last year's September Plenum which ordered go-slow on economic liberalisation. Though the government under him noted the deleterious effects of inflation and corruption, it hardly launched a mass drive on the issues. Besides, Li Peng has had no experience of reading the mood of the masses, which was evident from his peremptory declaration of Martial Law at the height of the pro-democracy

Thirdly, the Chinese liberalisation drive in the last eleven years was undertaken purely as an economic Palliative without integrating it in the overall power The stress on individual farming by abandoning collectivism, leave alone the commune; the

This is an enlarged version of an article in The Times of India (June 12, 1989).

drive towards privatisation via cooperatives in place of centralised economy; the recklessly open-door policy towards foreign capital with come-hither invitation of giant multinationals—all these were undertaken by totally abandoning the principle of checks and balance. As World Bank-IMF experts have noted, the Chinese open-door policy went far beyond anything done in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. The basic point of such an economic transformation is the stress on individual enterprise. The Chinese Government went further in price reforms relying on the market forces which Gorbachev has not yet undertaken in the Soviet Union.

What was lacking in China's economic liberalisation drive was a corresponding democratic functioning. Individual enterprise demands more elbow room for the individual — discarding of straitjacket political control. While some amount of discussion was permitted, it did not go far enough to act as the safety valve. Putting it simplistically, one may say that perestroika without glasnost can create a short-circuit leading to explosion. The economy was moving towards free-enterprise while politics

remained subjected to totalitarian control.

Fourthly, the ideological campaign for a new order in the economy to be reflected in the productive relations was totally lacking. On one side, there remained the old guards in the Party and government who are highly suspicious of the newfangled talk of democracy; and on the other, there was an avalanche of democratic ideas as well as crass consumerism of an up-and-coming Westernised elite in an essentially peasant-oriented society. In that situation, a dangerous cultural-ideological gap was widening between the elite at the top and the vast

peasant-ridden countryside.

If one may venture into comparison, Deng Xiaoping has persisted as a mere pragmatist in contrast to Mikhail Gorbachev who has emerged as a thinker applying the tenets of a new age to the realities of the times. Deng's economic reforms went far in copying and adjusting to the Western approach earning Western applause, while Gorbachev's New Thinking underscored the point that economic reforms have to be brought about by the consent of the masses, and hence the initiation of democratic rights and the intensity of passionate debates openly conducted. Had such an orientation permeated the Chinese leadership, no doubt the gruesome bloodbath of June 4 could have been avoided. One could not have possibly brought about a new economic order while continuing with the worship of Stalinism as the Chinese leaders pathetically tried to do.

It is this dilemma which was shown up in sharp relief in the handling of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) to crush the pro-democracy movement. Although the reforms on the Defence Modernisations launched in late 1978, this was in reality confined to modernising the weaponry, not reorientating the mind of the soldier. It needs to be noted here that the Pople's Liberation Army always loomed large in the psychological makeup of Mao's communism. Most of the veteran Party leaders were military Generals, and the glorification of the PLA has always been the essential part of the Chinese Communist Party's history. An Army of 34 lakhs, the PLA's ideological base was essentially that of the Chinese peasantry. Mao himself was never tired of emphasising that the PLA soldiers must be always linked in service to the masses. Out of this approach was born his famous metaphor that the Army's relations with the people should be that of fish with water, that is, that the Army has to draw its sustenance in service to the people. That outlook has worn out in the forty years since liberation. Besides, through all the turmoil of the Cultural Revolution, the Army was kept in a state of quarantine, that is, away from the people.

Thus, the winds of change that blew over the country under the modernisation drive hardly touched the PLA cadre just as it largely neglected the Chinese peasant. To despatch such an Army to suppress a massive unprecedented movement for democracy was to invite a terrible disaster. At the beginning, the soldiers were confused and at places fraternised with the students. At other places, their high-handedness led to instant angry attacks by prodemocracy protesters who had until then been maintaining examplary discipline. And then, when the PLA commanders found themselves divided on the question of handling the demonstration, came the order from the Central Military Commission for the bloody crackdown - underlining once again how far out of touch the leadership had become about the temper of the people.

The leadership of the entire operation is being provided by the Central Military Commission whose Chairman is Deng Xiaoping and the executive Vice-Chairman is the republic's President, Yang Shangkun. One of the prominent operators in the set-up is Qiao Shi who is known to be in charge of State Security and therefore regarded as the right person to put down the upsurge. Incidentally, this has led to the speculation that Qiao may become the Party chief replacing Zhao Ziyang who is branded as a

Whether the new arrangement will succeed is actually a moot question. The massacre and armed repression at Beijing have forced violent unrest to spread to other centres, some of which like Shanghai and Canton have a great past in revolutionary

A theory is being trotted out among Chinawatchers abroad that the peasantry will stand by the leadership and the democracy movement will be ultimately crushed. This is of course the tactical approach of the Deng leadership. The television which is the most effective medium to reach out to the vast peasant masses has now been concentrating how the 'counter-revolutionaries' showing attacked the soldiers, while the ravages of military

sector constituted one of the pillars noted Deng's Four attack on civilians are totally blacked out. The whole sector constituted one of the pillars noted Deng's Four attack on civilians are totally blacked out. The whole sector constituted one of the pillars noted by the sector constituted one of the pillars noted by the sector constitution. spectre of counter-revolution.

This theory — a variant of Mao's dictum that the countryside can overpower the cities — is based on a superficial generalisation in the present case. For one thing, the student movement in China has a strong revolutionary tradition. In fact, this year's democracy campaign was stepped up on the seventieth anniversary of the celebrated May Fourth Movement which had dealt a shattering blow on the old order in China: Secondly, it is to be noted that not only Beijing but also in many other centres, the workers and common citizenry have stood by the students and are still doing so. This combination can hardly be overpowered by sheer brute force. It may be put down temporarily, only to break out somewhere else. Thirdly, the summary removal of Zhao Ziyang from the post of the Party chief gives reason to believe that there are elements within the Communist Party who will strive for ending the line of repression pursued at the moment.

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From the beginning of the students' upsurge, the Chinese Communist leadership has taken the posture that it was all engineered by the counter-revolutionary forces. A provocative editorial in the official party paper, People's Daily (April 26, 1989), called for action against "conspiracy" and "turmoil". Soon after the proclamation of Martial Law, Li Peng was reported to have spoken about the American hand behind the democracy campaign. In contrast, on the very eve of the imposition of the Martial Law, the party General Secretary, Zhao Ziyang, took a 'sympathetic and mild view", according to Beijing Review, which is by no means a counter-revolutionary

It is worth quoting from Zhao Ziyang's talks with students when he visited them on May 19: "We are getting old and don't count much. But you young people have a long way to go." While stressing that things were "very complicated", Zhao assured the student demonstrators: 'The problems you raised will eventually be solved." Two days before, on May 17, Zhao had assured that there would be no reprisals against demonstrators and that the students' goals were positive. The two demands that the students put before Premier Li Peng on May 18 were the recognition of the student movement as a patriotic and democratic one and for live broadcast of of their dialogues with the government - both of which were rejected by Li Peng. Let the Beijing Review reporter describe the upshot: "The drama became even more intense when people watching the midnight TV programme on May 19' (the same evening) discovered that at the emergency meeting (of Party and government functionaries) where Li Peng was announcing tough actions to curb 'turmoil', the Party General Secretary Zhao Ziyang was conspicu-ously missing." That was the starting point of the widely held suspicion that he (Zhao) had been sum-

marily ousted by the hardliners. It is absurd to call this massive student movement as counter-revolutionary. They were engaged in nonviolent protests — including hunger strikes — and

(Continued on page 30)

Is this Counter-Revolution?

The following is a write-up published in Beijing Review (May 29-June 4, 1989) on the massive movement for democratic reforms in China before the crackdown. Beijing Review is an official publication (a 'Chinese weekly of news and views', as it is described on its cover) circulated in India by the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi. It is for Mainstream readers to judge from this account of the movement whether it was really "counter-revolutionary" as the Chinese authorities claim today.

—Editor

In the past few weeks, millions of Chinese striving for democracy have taken to the streets with unprecedented boldness.

It is the college students who took this movement from the point where it was little more than a campus discussion and nurtured it to a point where it has shaken the nation.

The movement was triggered by the death of Hu Yaobang, the former Party chief, who died on April 15. The mourning activities soon developed into prodemocracy demonstrations, which were disapproved of and obstructed by the Chinese authorities.

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An April 26 editorial in People's Daily, the official Party organ, linked their demonstrations with certain anti-government activities by a handful of people. It called on the whole Party and all the people to stop the "conspiracy" and "turmoil", which it claimed were aimed at "negating the leadership of the Party and the socialist system".

The editorial enraged the students, who regarded their activities as patriotic. The next day, hundreds of thousands of college students took to the streets in Beijing to voice their protest and present their demands. Police and soldiers in large numbers tried to stop them but without success.

Chanting slogans of support for party leadership and socialism, they demanded, among other things, the retraction of the editorial and the publication of an accounting of the properties owned by senior Party and government officials.

The first talks took place on Ment officials and some students

from Beijing's universities and colleges. But the results of the talks were deemed unsatisfactory by many students, especially the activists among them.

Again and again, the students complained about inadequate and unfair press coverage of their activities.

Press Freedom

Their struggle for fair press coverage meant raising the issue of a free press. What a shame, students said, that Chinese had to hear the news about China from foreign journalists broadcasting from abroad.

On May 4, the day to commemorate a famous democratic student movement 70 years ago, Beijing saw massive demonstrations with participation by students from virtually all the colleges and universities in the capital.

Leaders and the police showed restraint as hundreds of thousands of students marched without a permit down Beijing's main streets to blanket Tiananmen Square.

On May 6, a petition carrying the names of students from 24 of Beijing's colleges and universities was handed to the government.

The petitioners asked for talks about state recognition of their movement, and that those talks be broadcast, as well as for political reform, democracy and a full retraction of the April 26 People's Daily editorial.

On May 9, China's journalists, taking their cue from the students handed in a petition signed by 1031 reporters and editors also demanding talks with Party officials over the creation of a press law and freedom of the press.

Not only was the cause taken

up by the students who demonstrated in support of journalists, it also brought a new boldness to news coverage.

Hunger Strike

Infuriated by the repeated government delays in holding a direct dialogue, as it appeared to be the case, the students staged a hunger strike on May 13.

"They've tied our non-violent protests with the same kind of social turmoil that prevailed during the 'cultural revolution,'" said a Qinghua University student.

"We've just expressed the people's wishes that some corrupt government officials should be dismissed and that reform in politics, including that of the press, be speeded up." he added.

Subsequently, dialogues with several high-ranking Party and government officials took place but the basic demands of the students were still not met.

After reaching its fourth day, the hunger strike began to attract massive attention and sympathy. With each day that passed without dialogue with the authorities, the students' message spread further across the country.

The number of fasting students grew to 3000, along with the headlines that made it a focus of world attention.

The students were joined on May 16 by journalists. About 10,000 reporters and editors in Beijing had their own street rally. One of the banners carried by People's Daily staff read "Press reform is a must," while they chanted "People's Daily belongs to the people".

Journalists from most other newspaper offices, including the Xinhua News Agency, CCTV,

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Station, Beijing Review and China Daily, were warmly applauded by student protesters and tens of thousands of onlookers as they joined the students.

On May 17, the fifth day of the hunger strike, increasing concern and anger was felt throughout Beijing as more than 1000 of the students were hospitalised

after collapsing.

"We will combat until we have victory in spite of any sacrifice, even death," was one declaration by the Beijing University hunger strikers.

Almost 1.5 million people were believed to have joined the protesters that day, despite Party General Secretary Zhao Ziyang's speech saying there would be no reprisals against protestors and his concession that the students' goals were positive.

Increasing Support

This time the government was facing more than students and intellectuals. Now there were factory workers, farmers, businessmen, government functionaries and even non-military army officers who identified their interests as being the same as the students'.

Many angry protestors demanded that some of the Party and government leaders resign.

"They should not be so insensitive to the lives of young people. The students' demands on the state aren't that hard for the leaders to accept," an unidentified textile worker said.

Demonstrations gradually spread to almost every provincial capitals and many middle-sized cities.

Appeal by Congressmen

At the May 17 demonstration, 12 members of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress also urged the government to call a meeting and let both sides start talking.

China's four non-Communist party leaders, including Fei Xiaotong, Chairman of the China Democratic League, and Sun Qimeng, Chairman of the China Democratic National Construction Party, urged Party General Secretary Zhao Ziyang and other

immediate dialogue with the students to bring a quick end to the hunger strike.

On the same day 10 university presidents from Beijing sent a joint letter to the Party and government leaders calling on them to open a substantial dialogue with the students.

Although Premier Li met student representatives on May 18, he still refused to answer their two basic demands of recognising the student movement as a patriotic and democratic one and for live broadcasts of dialogues.

Instead he simply demanded that the Beijing Red Cross move all the fasting students to the

hospital.

With most fasting students suffering from illnesses, student leaders declared at 9 PM on May 19 that the fast would be changed to a sit-in.

Earlier in the day, the hunger strikers, who had been moved to buses because of rain, were visited by both Zhao Ziyang and Li

the Central People's Broadcasting Digitted bylendessamt Profindation and early two sounds of the Central People's Broadcasting Digitted bylendessamt Profindation and early two sounds of the Central People's Broadcasting Digitted bylendessamt Profindation and China Tiananmen Square and open an in his visit to the students in his visit to the students used a much milder tone than other officials and said with tears in his eyes: "We are here too late." He apologised and expressed his readiness to accept criticisms from the students.

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He tried to persuade the students to stop fasting before it was too late, saying: "We are getting old and don't count much. But you young people have a long way to go. You should take good care of yourselves."

"The problems you raised will eventually be solved," he said, stressing that things are "very complicated" and the solution of the problems would be quite a

process.

The drama became even more intense when people watching the midnight TV programmes on May 19 discovered that at the emergency meeting where Li Peng was announcing tough actions to curb "turmoil", Party General Secretary Zhao Ziyang was conspicuously missing. U

Wang Xin and others

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Big Dams: Wasteful Expenditure

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A DDRESSING the State Irrigation Ministers' Conference in July 1987, the Prime Minister expressed his unhappiness over the high costs, the very long gestation periods and the poor productivity of big surface irrigation projects. He said: "For 16 years, we have poured money out. The people have got nothing back, no irrigation, no water, no increase in production, no help in their daily life...."

if, inspite of this anguished indictment of big projects in general, and inspite of the specific opposition of many distinguished environmentalists, sanction has nevertheless been given to the Narmada project, it only shows how very powerful the big dam (BD for short) lobby is. Money, as they say, makes the mare go, and there is certainly very big money in big dams. All the more reason that the general public — who have to ultimately bear the burden of all unwise policies and wasteful expenditures must know exactly why the BD route to irrigation

is fraught with disaster.

The biggest argument against big projects today is their exorbitant cost. According to official figures, the cost of "creation of irrigation potential". which was around Rs 1200 per gross hectare in the first Plan, rose to over Rs 20,000 in the Sixth and is at present around Rs 40,000. However, the creation of potential is not the same thing as its actual utilisation. In irrigation parlance, a project is considered to be complete and its potential is supposed to have been "created" as soon as the construction of the reservoir and the distribution system upto the last outlet has been achieved. However, many additional works — such as field channels, control devices and land levelling - need to be carried out before the farmer can actually irrigate his field. In addition to such works, which are generally known as command area development (CAD) works, drainage must also be provided in many situations to prevent the land from being damaged by waterlogging and salinisation. Most of the ills of the BD sector of irrigation arise from the unbelievable fact that no provision is made for such essential works in the original estimates.

It is difficult, in the absence of firm information, to estimate how much additional cost these two items would involve. However, even if we assume a liability of no more than Rs 10,000 per gross hectare on an average on both these counts, the final figure for the creation as well as the utilisation of potential will be something like Rs 50,000 in the current Plan. This, from any point of view, is an Outrageously high price to pay for the kind of service

which can be provided by big projects. We shall have spent something like Rs 28,000 crores on the creation of a total potential of around

The author is the Chairman, Advisory Board on Energy.

24 million hectares (mh) between 1951 and 1990. According to the BD lobby, there would still remain another 24 mh of potential to be tapped and they feel that this should be done by 2010 AD. The cost of achieving such an objective would, at current prices, be around Rs 120,000 crores, on the assumption — which may well turn out to be unjustified - that the investment required would not go beyond Rs 50,000 per hectare. In the circumstances, it would be extremely unwise to make any further commitments in this sector.

Rising costs have also resulted in a sharp increase in the losses incurred by big irrigation projects as a whole. At the time of independence, irrigation works were able to cover their interest and maintenance charges. However, they soon began to incur losses which rose to about Rs 400 crores per annum in the early 1980s, to Rs 800 crores in the mid-80s and which are today in the neighbourhood of Rs 1000

The second major argument against big projects is their excessively long gestation periods, often running into decades. While all big projects necessarily take time to plan and complete, the problem in the BD sector was accentuated by an almost complete collapse of the planning process during the first 30 years of independence. There was a virtual scramble for big projects in almost all States and many projects were taken up without carrying out adequate studies and without making sure that there would be enough money to enable them to be completed in reasonable time. Estimates were deliberately kept low to achieve the desired internal rates of return, to improve their acceptability and to pander to political interests.

A vicious circle was thus set in motion. Hastily prepared projects languished for lack of funds and further delays took place on account of the revision of estimates which were found necessary. Time and cost overruns became the order of the day, resulting in a mess which will still take years to clean up. According to a study, "156 major irrigation projects have, over the years, undergone a cost escalation of 562 per cent. Against the original estimate of Rs 2156 crores, they are now expected to cost around Rs 14,000 crores." The irrigation establishments of the country, both at the Centre and in the

States, have indeed a great deal to answer for.

The third major argument against big projects is that they yield very poor returns by way of additional agricultural production. The basic reason for this situation is that our irrigation establishments have little interest in the utilisation of potential as distinguished from its creation. A serious attempt was made as far back as 1971 by the Agriculture Ministry to remedy this fatal flaw in the interest of greater agricultural production but Dr K.L. Rao. the then Minister of Irrigation, reacted to the idea to sharply that the Agriculture Ministry thangst in Foundation Chennal and eGangetti. best to take up CAD programmes under its own auspicies. Although the CAD programme was transferred to the irrigation Ministry at a later date, it is still looked upon as somewhat of an interloper by the latter and not given the importance it deserves.

No wonder the gap between "potential created" and "potential utilised" grew from 1.2 mh in the First Plan to 5.2 mh at the end of the Sixth Plan and is expected to increase to 5.6 mh at the end of the current Plan. Of the total additional potential of 20.8 mh which was created between 1951 and 1985, only 15.6 mh or 75 per cent was "utilised". It is this gap as well as the lack of progress on the CAD front which explains the poor capacity utilisation of big projects. According to David Seckler, three quarters of our big irrigation projects operated at only about 25 per cent of their capacity in 1980. According to another observer, Robert Chambers, canal irrigation in 1986 served only half of the area of potential created with "significant irrigation".

It is necessary to explain in this connection that according to the practice in vogue "potential created" gets converted into "potential utilised" as soon as a piece of land is supplied with water. Neither the timing nor the frequency nor again the quantity of irrigation supplied - all of which are so important from the point of view of crop production - are taken into account while carrying out this exercise. No wonder the productivity of canal irrigation is only around 50 per cent of ground water irrigation which can be applied by the farmer exactly when, and to the exact extent, required by the crop. It is also easy to understand why ground water, which does not require any investments for the creation of storages and the transport of water, for the carrying out of expensive CAD and drainage works or for the maintenance of huge and costly bureaucracies, should have outstripped canal irrigation even in terms of areas served. As a result, the most important source of irrigation as well as other water supplies today is not the BD sector but ground water.

ENOUGH has been said to indicate how sick the BD sector is. However, although this sickness is in large measure due to the dismal performance of irrigation departments, it must be appreciated that this sector suffers from certain intrinsic weaknesses which are extremely difficult to overcome.

Thus, it would surprise most people to know that the BD sector is extremely wasteful of the very resource it professes to husband. Apart from the very significant losses which take place from reservoirs by evaporation, it has been established that on an average only about 50 per cent of the water which leaves the headworks of a canal reaches the outlet the remaining 50 per cent is accounted for by evaporation and seepage losses. This is why the Israelis, who know the value of water, pour their surface water into underground acquifers for safe storage. They also transport water as far as possible

Big projects are answerfulnerable to premature siltation and the loss of storage capacity as a result of denudation and soil erosion in their watersheds. Since project estimates do not contain any provision for meeting this threat, it is left to other departments to handle it as best as they can. But their interest in this subject is necessarily peripheral.

Again, big projects are open to the most serious objections on environmental grounds. They involve the submergence of large areas of precious land which often include prime forests rich in wildlife They also contribute significantly to the waterlogging and salinisation of land not only on account of the seepage which takes place from unlined canals and distributaries but also of the wasteful way in which canal water is applied by farmers who are charged flat rates and not, as in Israel, on a volumetric basis. Yet again, big projects often give rise to health hazards and disturb ecological systems in a variety of ways.

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The menace of waterlogging is particularly significant in a country where agricultural land is a precious resource. Although exact figures are difficult to obtain - apparently because nobody is interested in the subject — it is known that at least 7mh of agricultural lands have been already damaged by waterlogging and salinisation and perhaps another 3 to 4 mh are seriously threatened. Although irrigation establishments are reluctant to discuss this threat to the land — apparently for fear that any attention to it might mean a reduction in the funds which can be made available for the creation of additional potential — the problem has become much too serious to be ignored any longer. Perhaps the worst example which can be cited of damage by waterlogging is provided by the Sarda Sahayak Project in UP. According to a recent study, the extension of this project "at an expenditure of Rs 384 crores has added 4 lakh hectares of irrigated areas but with a loss of 5 lakh hectares of irrigated area to water-logging, a net loss of 1 lakh hectares and a net negative effect of the Project on food production". It is of interest to note that the problem of waterlogging is worldwide and that as much land goes out of commission annually as a result of waterlogging as is brought under additional irrigation.

Big project also exact an extremely heavy price which in more advanced countries would be considered an unacceptable price to pay - by way of the incalculable human suffering caused by the uproof ing of communities from their ancestral habitats and places of work and resettling them elsewhere in a manner which is never fully satisfactory. They have also proved to be extremely difficult to manage efficiently and have given rise to unwieldy bureaucracies which have become a by-word for corruption and discrimination against tailenders.

Commonsense demands that instead of creating any more potential by the BD route, we should try to fully exploit the huge potential which has been already created by it. We should close the gap of 5.6 mh, improve the efficiency of canal irrigation, prevent further water-logging and reclaim the areas

(Continued. on page 25)

Dam or People?

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AUNOHITA MOJUMDAR

TODAY, ecological and environmental issues have become national pastimes among the Indian intelligentsia, emulating the trend in Western countries. The government, too, has extended its approval to this hobby by encouraging an interest in birds and animals under the aegis of wildlife conservation. Concern for the environment is realised in the creation of holiday homes in sanctified patches of

Publicity about 'Project Tiger' and afforestation' programmes, however, succeed in drawing attention away from the seriousness and depth of the real issues that underly ecological and environmental degradation: The exposure of faulty development strategies is left to environmentalists whose activities are presented as anti-development or outrageously labelled anti-national. Where criticism comes in the form of a people's movement, the issue is quickly

quenched as a law-and-order problem.

One such movement which may sooner or later acquire this status is the movement against the Auranga Dam Project in Palamau district, South Bihar, organised under the banner of the Visthapit Sangh. Though the leaders and the more educated members of the movement are fully aware of the environmental implications of dams, they have sought to retain the identity of the Sangh as a people's movement and have, therefore, restricted themselves to a demand for an adequate rehabilitation policy. The villagers, 95 per cent of whom are members of the Sangh, reveal, however, a growing' awareness of the larger issues involved in both dambuilding and in the demand for their rights.

Without entering into the debate about big dams, one can still assume that the prerequisite for any welfare project is intensive research. The benefits of the project, the area in which it is going to be located, the costs, the repercussions of the project, must be wholly understood before a project can be declared a beneficial undertaking. The Auranga River Project, merely on the basis of the rehabilitation policy formulated by the Irrigation Department, reveals an utter lack of thought that makes the project unviable. Despite the fact that the project was envisaged as far back as in 1967, and the irrigation colony has already been constructed, an adequate rehabilitation policy has not yet been formulated.

Though the Auranga River Valley Project will that it a large area (11 blocks in all), the question that is important, especially in a country of such Who wealth discrepancies, is that of the beneficiaries. Who will the dam benefit? The members of the Visth will the dam benefit? Visthapit Sangh feel that the dam is being constructed not as a public welfare project, but for the interest. interests of the richer peasantry, in order to secure their political support.

The benefits of largescale irrigation are most

readily available to the larger landowners who can afford to invest in the other inputs (such as fertilisers and better quality seeds) which are necessary for the maximum utilisation of irrigation. Irrigation may also entail a change in the cropping pattern which the richer peasantry are better equipped to meet. For the officials of the Irrigation Department, it is another opportunity to make money on the sly. The villagers, in fact, claim that the road to the dam site was deliberately constructed through a village so that the officials could show greater expenditure as compensation for the destruction of houses, and receive their own cut from the beneficiaries.

The Sangh sees this project as another ploy to tap the vote-bank. The poorer peasantry in the command area, who are uneducated, ignorant of the repercussions of largescale irrigation and have been. fed with government propaganda, will also welcome the project as evidence of the government's goodwill. In fact, the inauguration of the project was held in November 1984 on the eve of the State assembly elections held in December that year, even though the project had not received final sanction till then.

The project is going to displace 10,000 to 12,000 villagers from 30 villages. Since they belong to the most backward sections of society, it seems that the self-declared objective of "welfare" has been lost

sight of somewhere along the way.

The displaced may not be the only ones to suffer in the government's game of "development". In the same district, located about five kilometres from the Auranga dam site, the Malay dam is causing massive problems for its so-called beneficiaries. An example of inadequate and faulty planning, see page from the irrigation canal has led to waterlogging in the neighbouring areas. Almost all the houses in an adjoining village have collapsed, and the fields in the villages are waterlogged for most of the year, making cultivation impossible. Where the fields are located some distance away and at a higher altitude, though cultivation is possible, a number of crops cannot be grown because of excessive irrigation. Most of the villagers have been forced to build their houses on the roadside and take up cobbling and similar other professions to make the two ends meet. The government has not provided them with any compensation for having lost their lands and homes, despite frequent appeals to the authorities. A similar disaster created by the Auranga Reservoir Project would have disastrous consequences as it is a major dam whereas Malay is a medium-scale project.

Moreover, government officials in that area told us that the Malay dam would last a maximum of another two years (bringing its life span to a total of seven years) before it becomes inoperative owing to excessive situation. Thereafter, it will stand as a monument to stupidity - a comment on the

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quantum of research that goes inguizenese Arpa Spross Foundating the fulfill the meet remains a mystery. making them not only self-destructive, but financial risks and environmental hazards. Would it not be more productive for the government to rectify its previous errors and use its limited resources for making existing projects more utilitarian, rather than launching new projects every now and then? As well as this, the government does not seem to have considered alternative modes of development which would be better integrated to that area.

The ideal locations for dams are the hilly areas, because they cut down on the construction considerably by using the contours of the hills as natural support. However, this also implies that dams are located in areas which have dense concentrations of forests and tribal population. of these, though sanctified by the Five-Year Plans, are in reality being destroyed by the inroads of

"development".

The Auranga Reservoir Project is located in the Chhotanagpur plateau. The area contains a high density of tribal population. Among them are the Oraons, Kharwars and Cheroos. The Cheroos were the rulers in ancient times, and two forts about to be destroyed by the dam stand as testimony to their rule on the banks of the Auranga. Though the inhabitants of that area have been declared as backward, they have managed to survive against the odds, adapting themselves to their changing conditions and laws, retaining as much of their original lifestyles as they are able. Displacement from their environment will, however, result not only in further economic deterioration but, perhaps, destroy them completely.

On September 25, 1988, the Bihar Government released a report stating that 1429 bonded labourers had been rehabilitated in Palamau district. Though this is a commendable act, it must be seen in perspective. Whereas 1429 have been rehabilitated with much fanfare, 10,000 to 12,000 people are being displaced quietly without an adequate rehabilitation policy. Far from receiving the benefits of the project which will displace them from their lands and their homes, they are being left in a

worse economic condition.

The rehabilitation policy is based on the Land Acquisition Act of 1894. Though this Act has been considerably amended in some other states, it has not been redeemed of its colonial manifestations in Bihar. This wholly inadequate Act provides a uniform area of 0.25 acres of land for house building for all oustees, as well as cash compensation for land and homesteads. A further amount of Rs 700 is granted as shifting and settlement costs. Employment, "if possible", is granted to the oustees: A scheme for setting up rehabilitation colonies exists, which would provide them hospitals and schools.

The land for land compensation demanded by the villagers is being rejected by the authorities on the ground that it is not possible for them to obtain Yet, their contention is that the villagers will be able to purchase land with their meagre compensation. If the government itself does not have the purchasing power, how the poor villagers are

Whereas the value of the compensation money will depreciate rapidly, their demand for land will escalate land prices; and, in the command area, it will be impossible to obtain land. Past experience shows that in such situations the ready availability of relatively large amounts of money results in excessive and wasteful expenditure on marriages and on luxury goods such as radio sets and motorcycles, which, given their standard of living, is not

only unnecessary but unaffordable.

The Deputy Commissioner, Mrs Jalja, has autempted to meet this crisis by asserting that she will maintain a "strict control" over the money. Deposited in a bank, it will only be released with her consent. However, even if wasteful expenditure is prevented, the money is not likely to last, since their financial condition is such that they perennially subsist on a defecit budget. The villagers usually cannot meet their bare necessities, and this money will probably be spent on their basic requirements. This short-lived prosperity will end, leaving them worse off than before since they will also have lost their source of livelihood when they are displaced. No income-generating scheme or alternative mode of employment is being offered by the Rehabilitation Department. The villagers are mostly inexperienced in the ways of the world and cannot be expected to use their money to set up a business or invest in a profitable venture. They lack mobility and have remained unexposed to the outside world because they move out of their villages only when it is absolutely necessary for them to do so. It is unlikely that they will be able to adopt new modes of employment. Being farmers traditionally, they will continue farming, but become landless labourers in that area. This will serve the interests of the richer peasants admirably, since they normally suffer from labour shortage on their farms!

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All the villagers gather firewood and timber for their hosehold needs from the forests. Many of them supplement their income by selling forest produce such as lac, tendu leaves and mahua. These traditional sources of income will be denied them if they are displaced from their forested homeland.

Some of the tribes are completely dependent on the sale of firewood and their lifestyles revolve around its collection and sale. Yet others, such as the Parhaiyas of Salaiya village have a bamboo based economy. They make brooms and sieves out of bamboo. Yet, since they acquire bamboo illegally, through bribing the forest guards, they will not be given compensation for losing their source of income, but will lose their skill as craftsmen and become daily-wage labourers.

Not only is the Land Acquisition Act inadequate, but the implementation of the Act is being done in a haphazard, arbitrary and corrupt manner. The very demarcation of the submergence area is illogical, since the Fringe Line Survey leaves out areas on a lower altitude. It also does not take into account areas surrounded by water, though this would mean that many villagers will have to boat in and out of their homes. In areas where only the land or only

(Continued on page 35)



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Pakistanis are more rigid than Mujahideen: Shamuyarira

The Foreign Minister of Zimbabwe, Nathan Shamuyarira, chaired the ministerial meeting of the Non-Aligned Coordinating Bureau that took place in Harare from May 17 to 19, 1989. This meeting was held in preparation for the Ninth NAM Summit scheduled for early September in Belgrade. After the meeting Shamuyarira gave an exclusive interview to D.R. Goyal, Editor of Secular Democracy, and Sumit Chakravartty, Special Correspondent of Mainstream, in his office in Harare Sheraton on May 20. Dr A.W. (Archie) Singham, a leading specialist of non-alignment and Publicity Consultant to the UN Institute for Namibia based in Lusaka, who was present there, also participated in the discussion, supplementing Shamuyarira's views in his own language. Following is the text of the interview.

—Editor

DRG: What has been your overall impression of this meeting? Please give us an idea of Zimbabwe's

experience as the Chairman of the NAM.

NS: This has been a very successful meeting. We have now brought the economic issues on to the agenda of the non-aligned movement. I think this a very welcome step. We had here, in Harare, in 1988 the first meeting of the Economic Cooperation Committee. It was very successful and prepared a document which not only updates us on the question of North-South dialogue but also really stresses South-South cooperation as a major thrust. And that thrust has been assisted by two other developments.

One is the South Commission headed by Julius Nyerere that has produced two documents on the debt question and the Uruguay Round and are now producing two others. And the second is the AFRICA Fund. I think the AFRICA Fund is a very important aspect of South-South cooperation. Although it is now collectively discussing 25 million dollars in kind but the work that is going on to match those resources to the needs is really very indicative of South S

indicative of South-South cooperation.

The Chairman (of the AFRICA Fund) was describing to me how they are getting locomotives to Zambia with funds from Denmark and the locomotives themselves from here and technical expertise from another country. There are four countries involved in getting locomotives to Zambia.

Here we are getting tarpaulins and some trucks from India. I was talking to the PAC (Pan-African Congress of Azania) man just now and he was also telling me that they were getting substantial material assistance. So this is a good example of how South-South cooperation can work and I think that this is very important.

So far as the economic issues are concerned, we have put them on the agenda and I think that they are going to grow in stature on the agenda of the non-

the non-aligned movement. This is important.

The second issue which has been put firmly on has been a lot of talk on disarmament but it was

never really seriously on the agenda, I think the two Special Sessions of the UN General Assembly that we have had, specially the second one, have put disarmament firmly on the agenda now. The action of the superpowers in signing the INF Treaty and the thrust of perestroika have also made possible real movement on this question. So we can draw some satisfaction from the fact that disarmament is now firmly on the agenda of the international community.

The other area on which the non-aligned movement can take some satisfaction is on the liberation front. This has been a major principle of the movement since the very beginning but in the last few years there has been progress on two fronts.

One, with the intifada uprising in the occupied territories of the Middle East the picture has changed there. The superpowers are now seriously talking about an international conference and the Palestinians are now speaking with a sense of confidence they did not have before. They have now of course declared a Palestinian state and made concessions to Israel. But they are now in a strong position to do that whereas they were before in a weak position. Now they are in a position where they can make concessions, they can speak on international platforms in a voice that has more authority than ever before. Arafat is now being welcomed in many capitals of the world and he is speaking with more authority than he has ever done before. So a really significant progress has been made there.

On Namibia and southern Africa also progress has been made at least in that Resolution 435 of the UN Security Council is now being implemented. It's an old resolution, ten years old and a very bad resolution at that in the sense that it left the South Africans in control of the transition process. It has many weaknesses. But at least the fact that after ten years we have now been able to implement it is very important.

The NAM should really take credit on this because unfortunately the OAU has not been active on this front for different reasons which we are going to

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MAINSTREAM June 17, 1989

tackle in Addis Ababa when we get there in Sally Foustens have heard about your impression of the DRG: We have heard about your impression of But the NAM has been in the forefront of the We are the ones who have Namibian struggle. been petitioning and making representations to the five permanent members, we are the ones who have been pushing De Cuellar, now pushing Ahtisaari. We have been pushing De Cuellar to appoint deputies to these people. He has now agreed to appoint a deputy to Ahtisaari, who would be a citizen from Botswana. He has agreed to appoint a deputy to General Prem Chand - a general from Kenya who knows the area.

All these issues are the ones for which we have been fighting. At a very practical level these are three broad areas where we have made some

progress.

The fourth and the last area is the peace-making area. Peace-keeping is the work of the United Nations, they are the ones with the apparatus for peace-keeping forces and raising of money and soon. We have no funds, no money as you know. But we can assist in peace-making, creating a favourable climate for peace which is what we have been doing in Afghanistan, in Kampuchea and again in the Gulf, in some instances supporting the United Nations, in some instances taking initiatives on our own to get the parties together as was done in Kampuchea.

On the question of Afghanistan we wanted to do so here. The Chairman (of the NAM) wanted to meet the parties here - Pakistan and Afghanistan. We had them all here. But the Pakistanis refused to have the meeting here. The Chairman was ready to

meet both sides.

The Pakistanis said they have never met face to face with the Afghans. Even in Geneva in six years of negotiations they never met over the table. When they signed the agreements, there was signing in one room and then the papers were taken to the other room for the signing by the other side. Although Yaqub Khan and Wakil came on the same flight and even embraced each other in the plane they can't \ have talks.

The Pakistanis are being very difficult on Afghanistan, very difficult. I found them more rigid than the mujahideen. I talked to all of them. I don't

mind that being said.

In the Gulf or in Afghanistan where our members are fighting each other, we clearly have a peacemaking role. And if we are able to create a good climate then the UN can come in with its peacekeeping forces because they can raise the money from all the member-states as they have now done in Namibia.

We did a lot of the background work for the Namibian peace-making process, both through the frontline states and the joint commission. Cuba and Angola, who are both our members, kept us informed on all the talks and created the necessary conditions under which the agreement could be

We shouldn't raise our heads too much. But this is a record which we can defend. I think we should speak positively of these. Some work has been done, we have been active on many fronts and positive Afghanistan and Pakistan. In the context of Namibia one question is arising in the mind: from now till the elections, how to defend the SWAPO leadership in Namibia and supposing they win and form the government, what mechanism would have to be evolved that South Africa does not sabotage it?

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NS: South Africa is the biggest problem in Namibia, it is the stumbling block. Because it clearly does not want to see an independent Namibia emerge under SWAPO rule. They want to see it emerge under the rule of the DTA or some other neo-colonial government. So we have this constant

problem with South Africa.

That's why we had been criticising Resolution 435 earlier because it leaves South Africa in control which is a big difference with what happened here. Here at least the British took over the control. They used the Rhodesian administrative machinery but they were in control of that machinery. And it was crucial at one time when the President of Rhodesia wanted the ZANU (PF) to be banned and prepared a bill to be signed by the British Representative to ban the ZANU (PF). The British Representative received it, made a press statement to that effect but he did not sign. If it had been a different situation he would have signed it and gone ahead. So it's a big difference. The South Africans were left in control there (in Namibia).

However, Resolution 435 does say that the UN Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) has the power to supervise and control. And you can stretch the world 'control' to say that the UNTAG should be more assertive of the wishes of the international

community than they have been.

Well, we quarrelled with Ahtisaari saying that they have not been assertive. They have been saying: Our role is to monitor and giving up. We feel they should be fighting with the South Africans over control. Let the Security Council come in to make peace between them. We hope the deputies to Ahtisaari who have been appointed will assist in that process. But it's a continuing struggle.

Yesterday we got over a major hurdle in the Namibian situation in the meeting in Cahama. 1 was listening to the radio today and some one, a Cuban, is coming this afternoon to report to us. The fact that the South Africans agreed to send their troops to base is a major victory. Because if they had maintained their position the whole process would have been undermined and today we would have been in a very difficult situation. We would have been deciding whether to call off the whole implementation or not. But apparently they backed out at the last moment.

The SWAPO soldiers are all in Angola now and Nujoma paraded before the Commission three days ago: 5122 soldiers. He showed them and said: Here they are. And yet South Africa was insisting that there are two to three hundred of them in Namibia

and they are finding cache's of arms, etc.

But now that they have agreed to go back to Resolution 435 we hope they can now implement all the things that they promised would be implemented

April but have not been implemented, such as the mujahideen interim government. As Wakil mentionoutlawing of discriminating legislation, the release of prisoners, the return of refugees and so on and so forth.

DRG: And also the ammesty.

NS: The amnesty also. Amnesty is also to be

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But our meeting here is apparently quite crucial in that because the South Africans and the people in the Commission were waiting for that. They waited to see what we would be saying. And they wanted to use that as a kind of excuse if we had said that we were going to back the frontline states by sending our troops. If the NAM had sent troops - South Africa was waiting for that to use it as an excuse for delaying the process. So we avoided that.

On the other hand, if we had blamed the SWAPO for the incursions they would have said: Now look, the NAM is agreeing with us. Therefore, this thing

can't go on.

But by striking a middle course as we did, by being very firm, by saying that South Africa is a stumbling block on this question, they must do such and such things - one, two, three - and not ourselves pronouncing any thunder or lightning, we put them in a corner. When they read that resolution I think Crocker and others said: Look, now you would have to play ball.

They were waiting. Because this meeting was supposed to take place on Monday. They broke up on Monday. Tuesday they said the Presidents were meeting in Luanda. So they were playing for time.

Yesterday after receiving the news from us they took a final decision. So it (the NAM Bureau meet-

ing) was very crucial.

DRG: Did Pakistan get the support of some other countries in opposing the appeal and the meeting that the NAM Chairman wanted to hold on Afghanistan?

NS: Pakistan was alone. It was isolated on this Issue. No other government supported them on not wanting to talk.

She (Benazir) is disappointing on this issue (Afghanistan). She is supporting the military on this.

DRG: Did you meet her during your visit to Islamabad?

NS: Not this time. I met her for the first time when she was in the Opposition and when she had a different point of view; but not this time. I met the President. There was some confusion here. We sought advice. We did not know to whom President Mugabe should address the letter. Because the President there is described as an executive President, we asked: But what is the Prime Minister? They said: Well, the letter has to come to the President who is the executive President. The letter went to the President and that's why he met me. I did not want them to make an effort to meet the Prime Minister on the sides to speak. She would have had to take that initiative Occ. tive. Officially I met where the letter went.

l asked them in Islamabad. They said they are changing the situation, the Prime Minister is going to be the executive Prime Minister. But they have not yet changed it. That's why I did not meet her.

Well, Pakistan did try to drum up support for the

ed, Malaysia, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Sudan though not even the Sudan Government but its former Foreign Minister - have recognised it.

SC: What happened to Wakil's proposal for an Eminent Persons Group to bring about reconcilia-

tion between Pakistan and Afghanistan?

NS: We wanted to form it but because of the intransigence of Pakistan it was not possible for us to implement it.

We raised that with Pakistan as well and the President (Mugabe) raised it with Pakistan when Yaqub went to meet the President. Yaqub Khan said: This will complicate matters, it would push us back and so on and so forth. He talked himself out of it.

SC: But an appeal about which you mentioned in your press conference could have been issued.

NS: I had the appeal ready but I felt it should not be issued given the intransigence of Pakistan.

SC: An appeal would not have been denunciatory

or critical of Pakistan as such, isn't it so?

NS: No. But what were the issues we wanted to raise? There were three issues. One was an appeal to the superpowers: hands off Afghanistan! The other one, to Pakistan and Afghanistan to observe the Geneva Accords. The third one, the contentions one would have been an appeal to seek a political and not a military solution. Pakistan was disputing that.

I discussed it with them (the Pakistanis). They said they are not seeking a military solution; whereas clearly they are. So if we would have issued an appeal they would have rejected it on that score, on

the third point.

SC: That 'we are not seeking a military solution'? NS: Yes, and I did not want the Chairman to issue an appeal publicly that would be rejected. It was my business to do the groundwork to make sure that the appeal would be received, that there would be a positive response. And once I was certain that, it would not be recived by one party I told the Chairman that there would be on wisdom in issuing it.

DRG: Then the NAM would have become a party to the conflict with Pakistan that would not have

been a happy situation:

NS: Yes.

DRG: You wanted to continue to be in a position to talk to both.

There are two things as far as Afghanistan is concerned. As a result of my visit we were satisfied that Pakistan is the one violating the accords. The Chairman wanted to do two things: one, to have a meeting with Yaqub Khan and Wakil together, put some questions to them on the Geneva Accords to see whether the Pakistanis could come round; and two, to issue an appeal to the two superpowers and the two participants.

Pakistan refused the first one, saying that they had never met the Afghans face to face, not even at Geneva; and they are not going to meet them at

Нагате.

On the second one, that is, the appeal, the way

they got out of it, talked themselves was as follows: We said they were signatories to the Geneva Accords and therefore must take responsibility. They said: Well, we are not directly responsible for or involved in the conflict. It is the mujahideen and they should be here to answer the questions pertaining to military solution and so on. They said: The mujahidden have written to you and the Chairman wanting the Afghan seat in the NAM and the least we could do is to hear them. So if we wanted to make the appeal, were keen on it, would they be authorised to send a plane to pick up the mujahideen and bring them here immediately? They said they could get them here in 24 hours.

Of course that was not acceptable to us.

A move forward in these matters they did not want. They just wanted to push the Trojan horse of the interim government.

SC: The Indian External Affairs Minister's speech stresses a lot on the ecological question. Would you like to say something on that, on what has been done so far on the issue in the NAM?

NS: Yes, that is becoming a major interest of the NAM also. The Chairman went to the meeting at the Hague where the declaration was signed by no less than 36 heads of state round the world on the issue.

The question of the ozone layer is very important and common to everybody. People are very worried. After the signing we are working on the Gruntland Commission to see what we can do on that.

It's an item of concern to us.

Archie, you should say something on the NAM and Zimbabwe because you have been the guru of non-alignment so to say.

AS: We wanted Zimbabwe to come as the NAM Chairman because we wanted southern Africa to be on the front-burner. And we have done that.

As far as I am concerned, the Namibian question could not have been resolved had not Zimbabwe been the Chairman. Having a frontline state as the Chairman made the NAM directly involved in the resolution of the Namibian question. So I would say that was one of the most important achievements—I can speak now as an independent person—of Zimbabwe being the Chairman.

Secondly, I think most people have forgotten the fact that we wanted Zimbabwe to be the Chairman because this was after all the first state that undertook a military challenge to a colonial power. What the SWAPO, Angola and other frontliners in the NAM have done is essentially the defeat of South Africa as the milifary gendarme of the region. And in Angola that battle changed and totally destroyed Henry Kissinger's notion of the tar-baby status of the Republic of South Africa. South Africa was defeated on the ground militarily by a guerilla movement. It was defeated as a conventional army by another conventional army — Angola and their united forces. Thirdly, the myth of their air strike power was blown up.

So what essentially happened in a funny way is that

the non-aligned, by their support have militarily conclined the Republic of South Africa. So this is the cardinal significance of Zimbabwe's chairmanship. Though it did not engage in a combat with the Republic of South Africa, we have now changed the rules of the game.

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And the presence of Cuba alongwith Angola in these negotiations meant that we had two non-aligned countries confronting the Republic of South Africa.

NS: It is now on the defensive whereas earlier it was on the offensive.

AS: Right, because for the first time we have changed the rules of the game. So now we are no longer afraid about the national security of Zimbabwe.

We must now make sure that all the frontline states enjoy the same national security. It follows that the Republic of South Africa would not dare to militarily intervene into Zimbabwe for two reasons: (i) their capacity to defend themselves, and (ii) as the Chairman of the NAM any such step would invite the wrath of 102 countries.

So we have won a major military, diplomatic and political victory on the Namibian question.

DRG: If we make an extension of this, could a similar experiment be made in Central America by offering the next NAM chairmanship to Nicaragua?

AS: Well, it is a different cultural situation, different political situation. But it is possible. People used to say: Why Zimbabwe? What has Zimbabwe achieved?' The answer is that Zimbabwe has turned the corner on the legitimacy of the Republic of South Africa as a military and diplomatic power.

SC: What assistance and help did you get in this struggle from India? Could you kindly briefly tell us?

NS: You mean under the AFRICA fund?

SC: Not only under the AFRICA Fund but in general in your struggle against apartheid.

NS: Generally Rajiv Gandhi has been very supportive of President Mugabe. They are personal friends, as you know, and India is supporting all the moves that Archie has spoken about — work in Namibia and in other regions. We are grateful for that support from the side of India.

We have been consulting with both India and Cuba as the former Chairmen and we have relied on their advice on some important issues.

AS: One last thing I want to mention.

Had it not been for Zimbabwe, the debate in the United Nations against the 'gang of five' — I call them the 'gang of five' — who proceeded to use fiscal control to give South Africa the capacity to engage in what they did on April I, could not have acquired the character it did. It was largely the efforts of Zimbabwe led by its Ambassador that changed entirely 'the Security Council debate. So changed entirely 'the Security Council debate. So Zimbabwe conducted through its Ambassador a major diplomatic guerilla war against the 'gang of five'. And had he not achieved that, we would not be in the position that we are now.

Economic Development and Environmental Conflicts-II

JAYANTA BANDYOPADHYAY and VANDANA SHIVA

Three Economies of Natural Resources,

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new and holistic relationship between economics A and ecology depends on a holistic understanding of the natural resource process and utilisations associated with human societies and the natural eco-systems. The dominant ideology of development has been concerned only with the use of natural resources for commodity production and capital accumulation. It ignores the resource processes that have been regenerating natural resources outside the realm of human existence. It also ignores the vast resource requirements of the large number of people whose needs are not satisfied through the market mechanisms. The ignorance or neglect of these vital economies of natural resource processes and survival has been the reason why ecological destruction and threat to human survival have remained hidden negative externalities of the development process. To make good this shortcoming it is necessary to comprehend the place of natural resources in all the three economies.

The incompleteness of modern economies in handling natural resources in their ecological totality. has been voiced by many. The most penetrating description comes from Georgescu-Roegen who

The no deposit no return analogy benefits the business-man's view of economic life. For, if one looks only at money, all one can see is that money just passes from one hand to another; except by regrettable accident it never gets out of the economic process. Perhaps the absence of any difficulty in securing raw materials by those countries where modern economics grew and flourished was yet another reason for economists to remain blind to this crucial economic factor. Not even the wars the same nations fought for the control of the world's natural resources awoke the economists from their slumber.

While trade and exchange of goods and services have always been present in human societies, the acceptance of the market to the position of the highest organising principle of societies led to the neglect of the other two vital economies. The hidden negative externalities have, thus, created new forms of poverty and underdevelopment. The biggest problem is that when exclusive attention is being given to monetary flows, requirements of natural resources not backed up by suitable purchasing power cannot be registered on the economic scene. As a result, specially in the context of the Third World, the place of natural resources in the economy of natural resource production (or the nature's economy) or in the survival economy of non-market consumption

The authors represent the Research Foundation for Science and Ecology, Dehra Dun. Dr Vandana Shiva is the Director of the Foundation. This contribution is taken from IFDA Dossier 71 (May-June 1989). The first part of this article appeared in Mainstream (June 10, 1989).

for biological sustenance of the marginalised poor gets ignored. The political economy of the ecology movements cannot be understood without a clear comprehension of the place of natural resources in the three distinct economies. The ecology movements are the first indicators of compatibility and conflict among the three competing demands over natural resources. In this way, the articulation of these three economies provide the foundation of a framework for an ecologically sustainable and equitable process of economic development that ensures survival and does not threaten it. The benefits and costs associated with development projects thus need to be evaluated not only in the framework of the market economy but also the other two economies associated with natural resources.

The words ecology and economy, have emerged from the same Greek word 'oikos' or the household. Yet in the context of market-oriented development they have been rendered contradictory. 'Ecological destruction is an obvious cost for economic development' — the ecology movements are told. Natural resources are produced and reproduced through a complex network of ecological processes. Production is an integral part of this economy of natural ecological processes but the concept of production in the context of development economics has been exclusively identified with the industrial production system for the market economy. Organic productivity in forestry or agriculture has also been seen narrowly through the production of marketable products of the total productive process. This has resulted in vast areas of resource productivity, like the production of humus by forests, or regeneration of water resources, natural evolution of genetic products, erosional production of soil fertility from parent rocks, etc., remaining beyond the scope of economics. Many of these productive processes are dependent on a number of ecological processes. These processes are not known fully even within the natural science disciplines and economists have to make real efforts at internalising them. The paradox is that through the resource ignorant intervention of economic development at its present scale, the whole natural resource system of our planet is under threat of a serious loss of productivity in the economy of natural process. At the present moment, the ecology movements are the sole voice to stress the economic value of these natural processes. The market-oriented development process can destroy the economy of natural processes by overexploitation of resources or by destruction of ecological processes that are not comprehended by economic development. And these impacts do not necessarily occur within the period of the development projects. The positive contribution of economic growth from such development may prove totally inadequate to balance off the invisible or delayed negative externalities from their damage to the economy of mathy alectoral economy but cal processes. In the large context, economic growth is threatened by its expansion. cal processes. In the large context, economic growth can, thus, itself become the source of underdevelopment. The ecological destruction associated with uncontrolled exploitation of natural resources for commercial gains is a symptom of the conflict between the ways of generating material wealth in the economies of market and the natural processes. In the words of Commoner:

Human beings have broken out of the circle of life driven not by biological needs, but the social organisation which they have devised to 'conquer' nature: means of gaining wealth which conflict with those which govern nature.

Modern economics and concepts of development cover a miniscule portion in the history of economic production by human beings. The survival economy has given human societies the material basis of survival by deriving livelihoods directly from nature through self-provisioning mechanisms. In most of the Third World, a large number of people, are deriving their sustenance in the survival economy that remains invisible to market oriented development. Within the context of limited resource base, the destruction of the survival economy takes place through the diversion of natural resources from directly sustaining human existence to generating growth in the market economy. Sustenance and basic needs satisfaction is the organising principle for natural resource use in the survival economy in contrast to profits and capital accumulation being the organising principles for the exploitation of resources for the market. Human survival in India till today is largely dependent on the direct utilisation of common natural resources.9 The ecology movements are raising their objections against the destruction of these vital commons so essential for human survival. Without clean water, fertile soils and crop and plant genetic diversity, economic development will become impossible. Sometimes by omission and sometimes by commission, formal economic development activities have impaired the productivity of common natural resources which has enhanced the contradiction between the economy of natural processes and the survival economy.

The organising principles of economic development based on economic growth renders valueless all resources and resource processes that are not priced in the market and are not inputs to commodity production. This premise very frequently generates economic development programmes that divert or destroy the resource base for survival. While the diversion of resources, like diversion of land from multipurpose community forests to monoculture plantations of industrial tree species or destruction of common resources, or diversion of water from staple food crops and drinking water needs to cash crops are frequently proposed as programmes for economic development in the context of the market economy, they create economic underdevelopment in the economies of nature and survival. The ecology movements are aimed at opposing these threats to survival from the market based economic development. Thus in the Third World ecology movements are not the luxury of the rich but are a survival imperative for the majority of the people whose survival

The political foundation of the ecology movements lie in their capacity to enlarge the spatial, temporal and social basis for the evaluation of development projects — in their capacity to bring into the picture all the three economies described above. A new economics of development will emerge only when these three economies can be conceptualised within a single framework.

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Technology Choice: Towards Holistic Ecological Criteria

When economic development programmes are seen in the perspective of all the three economies, a clearer view of the political economy of the conflicts over natural resources is expected to emerge. In the dominant mode of economic development perceived from within the framework of market economy, mediation of technology is assumed to lead to control over larger and larger quantities of natural resources, thus turning scarcity into abundance and poverty in affluence. Technology, accordingly, is viewed as the motive force for development and the vital instrument that guarantees freedom from dependence on nature. The affluence of the industrialised West is assumed to be associated exclusively with this capacity of modern technology in generating wealth.

The concept of technology per se as a source of abundance and freedom from nature's ecological limits are in part based on the limitations of market economy in understanding in a holistic manner the resources it-exploits. Only when development processes are viewed in the holistic perspective of all the three economies can the scarcities and under-development, associated with abundance and development, be clearly seen. Most resource intensive technologies operate in the enclaves with enormous amounts of various resources coming from diverse ecosystems which are normally far away. This long, indirect and spatially distributed process of resource transfer made possible by energy intensive long distance transportation leaves invisible the real material demands of the technological processes of development.

The spatial separation of resource exhaustion and creation of products have also considerably shielded the inequality creating tendencies of modern technologies. Further, it is simply assumed that the benefits of economic development based on modern technologies will automatically get percolated to the poor and the needy, growth will ultimately take care of the problems of distributive justice. This would, of course, be the case, if growth and surplus were in a sense absolute and purchasing power existed in all socio-economic groupings. None, however, is correct. Surplus is often generated at the cost of ecological productivity of natural resources or at the cost of exhausting the capital of non-renewable resources. For the poor, the only impact of such economic activity, very often, is the loss of their resource base for survival.

It is, thus, no accident that the modern, efficient productive' technologies created within the

context of growth in market economic terms are associated with heavy social and ecological costs. The resource and energy intensity of the production processes they give rise to demands ever-increasing resource withdrawals from the natural ecosystems. These excessive withdrawals in course of time disrupt essential ecological processes and results the conversion of renewable resources into nonrenewable ones. A forest provides inexhaustible supplies of water and biomass including wood, over time if its capital stock, diversity and hydrological stability are maintained and it is harvested on a sustained yield basis. The heavy and uncontrolled market demand for industrial and commercial wood, however, requires continuous over felling of trees which destroys the regenerative capacity of the forest ecosystems and over time converts the forests to non-renewable resources. Sometimes the damage to nature's intrinsic regenerative capacity is impaired not directly by overexploitation of a particular resource but indirectly by damage caused to other natural resources related through ecological processes. Thus under tropical monsoonic conditions overfelling of trees in catchment areas of streams and rivers destroys not only forest resources. but also stable, renewable sources of water. The resource intensive industries do not merely disrupt essential ecological processes by their excessive demands for raw materials, they also destroy and disrupt vital ecological processes by creating pollution of essential resources like air and water. In the words of Rothman:

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The private economic rationality of the profit seeking business enterprise is a murderous providence because it cannot guarantee the optimum use of resources for society as a whole. It cannot avoid continually creating situations which cause the pollution of an environment.¹⁰

In the context of resource scarcity where most resources are already being utilised for the satisfaction of the survival needs, further diversion of resources to new uses will have the possibility of threatening survival and generating conflicts between demands of economic growth and requirements of survival. It therefore becomes essential to evaluate the role of new technologies in economic development on the basis of their resource demands and its conflict with the demands of survival. The productivity of a technology in the perspective of human survival must distinguish outputs in terms of their potential for satisfaction of vital or non-vital needs, because on the continued satisfaction of vital needs depends human survival.

In the context of the market economy, the indicators of technological efficiency and productivity are independent of the difference between the satisfaction of basic needs and luxury requirements, between resources extracted by ecologically sensitive insensitive technologies or of the nature of the contribution of economic growth to the diverse sociouniform distribution of purchasing power and scanty knowledge of or respect for ecological processes, sumption of non-vital products. The expansion of non-vital goods very often leads to further diversion

of vital natural resources. In a world of limited and shrinking resource base, and in the framework of market economy, luxury non-vital requirements start getting satisfied at the cost of vital needs for survival. The high powered pull of the purchasing capacity of the rich of the world can draw out necessary resources in spite of resource scarcity and resulting conflicts.

The ideological and limited concept of productivity of technologies has been universalised with the consequence that all other costs of the economic process become invisible. The invisible forces which contribute to the increased 'productivity' of a modern farmer or factory worker come from the increased consumption of non-renewable natural resources. Lovins has described this as the amount of 'slave' labour at present at work in the world. According to him, each person on earth, on average possesses the equivatent of about 50 slaves, each working a 40 hour week. Man's annual global energy conversion from all sources (wood, fossil-fuel, hydroelectric power, nuclear) at the present time is approximately 8×10^{12} watts. This is more than 20 times the energy content of the food necessary to feed the present world population at the FAO standard per capita requirement of 3600 cals/day.

In terms of workforce, therefore, the population of the earth is not four billion but about 200 billion, the important point being that about 98' per cent of them do not eat conventional food. The inequalities in the distribution of this 'slave' labour between different countries is enormous, the average inhabitant of the US for example, having 250 times as many 'slaves' as the 'average Nigerian'. And this, substantially, is the reason for the difference in efficiency between the American and Nigerian economies: it is not due to the differences in the average 'efficiency' of the people themselves. There seems no way of discovering the relative efficiencies of Americans and Nigerians. If Americans were short of 249 of every 250 'slaves' they possess, who can say how 'efficient' they would prove themselves to be !!

'efficient' they would prove themselves to be.11 The increase in the levels of resource consumption is taken universally as an indicator of economic development. If the present level of resource consumption in the US is accepted as the development objectives of India, the total resource demands of 'developed' India can be calculated by multiplying the current resource consumption by a factor of 250. Neither our forests, our fields or rivers can sustain such a "development". When the per capita resource consumption is considered, the Malthusian argument relating to population with resource scarcity does not hold good. More significant than the population factor is the total resource factor. Thus, although many countries of the South have a much larger population than those of the North, the industrialised quarter of the world uses more grain than all the other three quarters put together. This high consumption is due to the fact that intensive livestock production in industrialised countries accounts for 67 per cent of their total grain cosumption. This process of livestock management for the production of meat, as reported by Odum, requires ten calories of energy input to produce one calorie of food energy.¹² The energy subsidy provided by the capital stock of the Earth's non-renewable resources make a resource inefficient process look as efficient in the market economy. It is interesting to note that even in the West, about a century back, one calorie of food was produced by using a fraction of a calorie of energy input. The same is true in the economics of water resources use in modern agriculture. When the production of high yielding varieties of seeds are evaluated, not on productivity per unit land (tons/ha) but per unit volume of water input (tons/k lit) these miracle seeds of Green Revolution are seen as 2-3 times less efficient in food production than, say, the millets. The results of evaluation of technological efficiency of processes associated with economic development, when re-examined on a holistic basis and optimised against all resource inputs, would generally lead to the conclusion that

the much talked of efficiency of widely practiced high technology is not intrinsically true. They are, in fact, highly wasteful of materials and pollutive (that is, destructive to the productive potential of the environment).¹³

New technologies in the market economy are innovated for profit maximisation and not to encourage resource prudence per se. The extent of inefficiency in the utilisation of natural resources with production processes based on resource intensive technologies can be illustrated with the production of soda ash, an important industrial material. In the Solvay process for the production of soda ash, the two materials used are sodium chloride and limestone. The entire limestone used in the process ends up as waste material. Twentyfive per cent of the sodium chloride is lost as unreacted salt. From the balance 75-80 per cent the acidic half is lost and only the basic half goes into the final product. Therefore, only 40 per cent of the raw materials consumed are actually utilised. The waste products go to pollute land and water resource systems. The economy of the process is artificially made good by concessions in procuring limestone, salt and fuel and further concessions in respect of land, transport, etc. It is such subsidies of natural resources which makes the counter-productive processes appear as efficient.

Guided by a narrow distorted concept of efficiency and supported by subsidies of all types, technological change in market economy oriented development continues in a direction of resource intensity, labour displacement and ecological destruction. The longterm continuation of such processes will lead to the destruction of the resource base of the survival economy and to human labour rendered dispensable in the production processes of the market economy. The partisan assumptions of modern economic development which cannot internalise the economy of natural processes and the survival economy are thus being raised to the level of universality. As a result, with the expansion of economic development in the Third World, the resource intensive and socially partial development is leading to social instability and conflicts. While the ecology movements in the industrial countries are directed against more recent threats to survival like pollution, the ecology movements in the Third World have a much longer history related to resource exhaustion and ecological degradation of natural eco-systems. It is in these

Market Push towards Ecological Destruction

In the absence of a deeper understanding of the economy of natural processes and the survival economy, the critique of the market economy oriented development, technology choice and natural resource use that is presented by the ecology movements as a critique of a particular development and technology paradigm is naively constructed as a critique of development per se, technology per se and against any form of intervention into nature and natural resources. In this way the intervention of the market is tautologically defined as the only justified route towards development and introduction of short-term profit maximising technologies become the only vehicle for achieving it.

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. The ideology of this development is limited within the limits of market economy. It views the natural resource conflicts and ecological destruction as separate from the economic crisis, and proposes solutions to the ecological crisis in the expansion of the market system. As a result, instead of programmes of gradual ecological regeneration of natural resources, their immediate and enhanced exploitation with higher capital investment gets prescribed as a solution of the crisis of survival. Clausen, as the President of the World Bank, recommended that 'a better environment, more often than not, depends on continued economic growth'. In a more recent publication, Chandler further renews the argument in favour of a market-oriented solution for the ecological problems and believes that concern for conservation can only come through the market.14 This non-organic growth was questioned by the African farmers in the following words: 'Can you turn a calf into a cow by plastering it with mud?"15 There are some false assumptions behind such expectations for the market solutions to ecological crises, particularly in the context of the Third World countries. The anarchy of growth and the ideology of development based on it are the prime reasons behind the ecological crises and destruction of natural resources. Introduction of unsustainable cash crops in large parts of Africa is among the main reasons behind the ecological disaster in that continent. The destruction of the ecological balance of the rainforests of South America is the result of the growth of agribusiness and cattle ranching in the clearfelled areas. The business groups encouraging cash cropping can move out when the productivity of the newly opened land will fall. They have no compulsion towards the ecological rehabilitation of the ravaged land. They command the resource base by making decisions that transcend their basis in legal ownership, but do not have to bear the ecological costs of the destruction of soil and water systems. The costs of destruction of Africa's grazing lands and farm-land, and of Latin America's forests have not been borne by trans national food business but by the local peasants and tribals A aris and tribals. Agribusiness just moves on to other resources and other sectors to maintain and increase profits. The global market economy has no internal mechanism for an of mechanism for ensuring ecological rehabilitation of

costs of ecological destruction are left behind to be borne by the residents of the respective areas alone who participate in the survival economy of the same land. Under these conditions the market is incapable of responding to the requirements of the economy of nature and the economy of survival. Even while the market economy erodes nature's economy and creates new forms of poverty and dispossession, the market is proposed as the solution to the problem of ecologically induced poverty. Such a situation arises because the expansion of the market is mechanically assumed to lead to development and poverty allevia-

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In the ideology of the market, people are defined as poor because they do not participate overwhelmingly in the market economy and do not consume commodities produced for and distributed through the market even though they might satisfy those needs through self-provisioning mechanisms. They are perceived as poor and backward if they eat self-grown nutritious millets and not commercially produced, commercially distributed processed food; they are seen as poor and backward if they live in ecologically suited, self-built housing from local natural resources like bamboo, stone or mud instead of cement concrete bought from the market; they are seen as poor and backward if they wear indigenously designed handmade garments of natural fibre instead of mechanically manufactured clothes made of man-made fibres. The culturally conceived poverty based on non-Western modes of consumption is often mistaken to be misery. (Culturally perceived poverty is not materially rooted poverty or misery. Millets or maize, the common non-Western staple, are nutritionally far superior to processed foods and are again becoming popular in the West as health foods through the alternative movement. Huts built with local materials represent an ecologically more evolved method of providing shelter for human communities than the concrete houses in many rural socio-ecologic conditions. Natural fibres and local costumes are far superior in satisfying the region-specific need for clothing than the manufactured nylon and terelene clothing, especially in the tropical climate.) culturally induced perceptions of poverty and back-Wardness have provided a great deal of undeserving legitimisation for the accepted form of development, which has, in turn, created further conditions for invisible material poverty, or misery, by the denial of survival needs themselves through resource intensive production processes. Cash crop production and food processing divert land and water resources away from sustenance needs, and exclude increasing numbers of people from their entitlement to food as described by Barnett:

The inexorable process of agriculture-industrialisation and internationalisation are probably responsible for more hungry people than either cruel wars and unusual whims of new people than either cruel wars and unusual whims of nature. There are several reasons why the high-technology-export-crop model increase hunger. Scarce land, credit, water and technology are pre-empted for the export market. Most hungry people are not affected by the market at all... The profits flow to corporations that have no interest in feeding hungry people without money.¹⁶

patural resources destroyed by the market itself. The The correlation of development as an effort in poverty removal and the actual creation of conditions of material poverty as a result is best exemplified by the Ethiopian case. The displacement of nomadic Afars from their traditional pasture lands in Awash Valley due to the pressures of commercial agriculture organised by the foreign companies led to their struggle for survival in the fragile uplands which degraded the ecosystem and led to the starvation of cattle and the nomads. The market economy thus conflicted with the survival economy and nature's economy in the uplands. At no point has the global marketing of agricultural commodities been assessed in the background of the new conditions of scarcity and poverty that it has induced. The new poverty is no-longer cultural and relative. It is absolute, threatening the very survival of millions on this planet. At the root of the new material poverty lies an economic paradigm which is governed by the forces of the market. It cannot assess the extent of its own requirements for natural resources, and it cannot assess the impact of this demand on ecological stability and survival. As a result, economic activities that are most efficient and productive within the limited context of market economy, often become inefficient and destructive in the context of the other two economies of nature and survival.

The logic of the market by itself is not adequate to induce these changes in resource use that threaten ecological destruction and survival. Development as an ideology allows the indirect entry of global market domination. It creates a need for international aid and foreign debt which provide the capital for such development projects that commercialise or privatise resources. Control over local resources thus increasingly shifts out of the hands of local communities and even national governments into the hands of international financial institutions. The conditions for loan determine the mode of utilisation of natural resources. The pressure of repayment and servicing of debts further consolidates the globalisation. Total integration with the global market economy thus marginalises the concern for the economy of natural processes and the survival economy. In the resulting anarchy of resource use, the visible enclaves of economic development with their elite minority residents get a disproportionately high access to resources and the invisible hinterlands of economic underdevelopment, the homes of the silent majority, are left with shrinking access to a shrinking resource base.

The ecology movements in India are the expression of protests against the destruction of the two vital economies of natural processes and survival from the anarchy of development based on market economy. It is not surprising that these movements are strongly critical of the international lending institutions, whose finance fuels the process of the monetary growth oriented economic development at the cost of ecology and survival. Thus, it is also not surprising that the international lending institutions and the elite of the recipient countries look down on the ecology movements as obstructionist and anti-progress, since they are committed Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennal and eGarcrattions Committee on March 16, to obstruct ecological destruction and halt the process the House Appropriations Committee on March 16, 1976:

to obstruct ecological destruction and halt the process that results in progress for a few and regress for the many. In the whole perspective of the three economies, the proverbial cake is shrinking, while in the limited perspective of market economy there is a short-term and unsustainable growth. There is increasting scarcity of water, of forms of biomass like fodder, fuel, etc., and there is ever-increasing tendency of short meteorological drought turning into large-scale desertificatian. On the other hand, there are more bottled drinks, more milk and milk products in urban markets, more flowers and vegetables for the urban export markets.

Left to itself the development programmes of the Third World would have, by now, internalised the vital economies of natural processes and survival. The appearance of large international aid projects and loans, however, induces a tremendous support to the classical model of growth based development. It is from this perspective that the ecology movements are critically evaluating the international financial institutions and their aid-lending programmes. In this respect, the most vocal criticisms have been made against agencies like the World Bank' and its regional counterparts. There are three important reasons why ecology movements are so critical of the multilateral development banks (MDBs).

Firstly, much of the loans and credits from these banks go to environmentally sensitive areas such as agriculture, forestry, dams and irrigation. In 1983, half the project loans of about US \$ 22 billion were directed to these sectors. Thus, although as a percentage of total economic investment these loans account for a fraction, in terms of the impact on natural resource systems they are very significant.¹⁷ The second reason why these MDBs are crucial to determining development patterns and resource use in Third World countries is that they require borrowing governments to demonstrate commitment to projects by pledging so called 'counterpart' funds and making complementary investments of their own. The World Bank in particular has overwhelming influence on overall development policy through its country programming papers, sector policy papers and country economic memoranda. But the MDBs' greatest leverage is in 'structural adjustment' and sector lending by which the banks' influence longterm economic policy and not just single projects. The Structural Adjustment Loans of the World Bank are creating long-term institutional changes towards privatisation and the adoption of a strategy of export led growth, both of which strongly influence the pattern of control over and utilisation of natural resources.

The third mechanism by which the MDBs affect the utilisation of natural resources is through the links between foreign aid and export financing. In 1978, Johnston Jr. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs, testified to the US Congress that "every dollar we pay into the MDBs generate about US \$ 3 in business for US firms". Bushneil, Deputy Director for "developing nations" of the US Department of Treasury stated before the Subcommittee on Foreign Operations of

From US national point of view, these banks encourage development along lines compatible with our own economy. They stress the role of markets forces in the effective allocation of resources and the development of outward-looking trading economies.... Our participation... in international development banks will also provide more assured access to essential raw materials, and a better climate for US investment in the developing world. 18

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The heavy involvement of international finance in the economic development of the Third World countries changes the natural resource management strategies in drastic ways. Rapid growth of exportoriented resource utilisation has led to countries being caught in the debt trap with which comes ecological degradation. The linkage of borrowing and ecological degradation can be exemplified with the case of Brazil. In the 1980-82 period, Brazil was borrowing about US \$ 300 million per year which rose to about US \$ 1950 million in 1983 and 1984. When the disbursements were used up, Brazil was not able to provide the counterpart funds to complete the projects and loan repayment started on incomplete projects. The load comes on farming for export, leading to more deforestation, more human displacement in the Amazon. The story of Africa, the continent with the most serious ecological crisis, is no different. In 1983 there were no African countries among the big debtors. Today, the external debt of the forty-two sub Saharan economies is in the order of US \$ 130-135 billion. The case of Sudan is illustrative of what is happening to Africa. A few years ago, agencies like FAO saw Sudan as having the greatest agriculture potential, especially for export crops. Sudan did 'develop' its agriculture, with heavy borrowing. Today, Sudan has a US\$ 78 million proposal for emergency aid and US\$ 213 million in interest due, after rescheduling on US \$ 10 billion external debt. Thousands of Africans are dying because development first destroyed their sustenance base and now paying the debts for that development is further depriving them of their entitlement to survival. When the whole economy is in such a shape Africa's ecological regeneration is surely a far cry.

The need for a development that will lead to improved standards of living, not undermine them, will create ecological stability, not instabilities, is clear. The crises of market-orientation of economic development has created responses from the local communities as well as from ecological movements. The contribution of international development aid and loan to the processes of ecological destruction of the resource base for survival in the Third World has provided the platform for a joint global response of the ecology movements in the North as well as in the South.

The ecology movements need to be analysed against the background of the forces of economic development. The various dimensions of social movements—for survival, for democratic values, for decentralised decision-making at the local levels are all components of the ecology movements. While at the local level they may demand better management of forests in mountain catchments or better conser-

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vation of water in drought-prone areased to the cample oungation Chennai and e Cangotti about four decades of developthey are slowly progressing towards defining an alternative model for economic development — a new economics for a new civilisation. That is how ecology movements all over the world are coming closer as an upcoming political force that will put its signature in the history of humankind in the coming few decades.

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Under such pressures the agencies of classical models of development are also turning environmental' the overnight, and a new co-option attempt has begun. The time for the ultimate battle between the traditional concepts of development and the new ecological development is drawing nearer. The new packaging of old development model is characterised by the co-option of the language of the movements to decorate the contents of old development programmes guided by the market and based in favour of those who already enjoy economic superiority. A section of 'non-government organisations' is taking on as the new delivery system in place of the governmental organisations. With the help of these NGOs or newly named people's organisations (POs), a great deal of international aid is focussing on environment as a sector for funding.19 New forestry programmes, drought protection programmes, etc. are being handed over to the NGO sector, as if leaving matters to these NGOs mean a new conceptual framework for development. It is forgotten that as long as the development programmes are framed within the limits of market economy and do not internalise the economy of natural processes and the economy of survival, results cannot be different. The fundamental difference between hollow-decorative environmentalism and deep-scientfic ecology must be understood. With the help of such a clarity ecology movements which emerged against uncontrolled deforestation has also stood up against ecologically harmful afforestation programmes, as in the case of Social forestry based on eucalyptus monoculture. While water from the underground aquifers can save the people from an impending disaster, ecology movements are opposing uncontrolled uptake of groundwater because it goes against both economy of natural processes and the economy of survival. There is a criticism from the protagonists of hollow environmentalism that deep ecological arguments can wait, what cannot wait is instant environmental action. In this way much of the activism of ecology movements is being fettered away in micro level actions while their challenges at the micro-conceptual level gets diffused. The task of the ecology movements is to face both the challenges in a coordinated form.

The ecology movements have raised issues that on the one hand, touch upon the question of activating and, touch upon the decision plan to safeguard natural processes and survival, while, on the other hand, providing the macro-concept of ecological development in the global, national and regional spaces. The issue is not simply of planting trees here or protecting a tiger there. The issue is related to a fundamental change should development, about a related to a rundament, about development, central civilisation. They are related to the most Central issues of ecological degradation of nature's productions of ecological degradation of nature's productivity that is threatening human survival at a

ment efforts if the Third World is still faced with hunger, it is time that the old development strategy be replaced by a new one that is based on a holistic understanding of the total situation. The ecology movements of the world have entrusted themselves with the most challenging task of evolving humane and sustainable development. [(Concluded)

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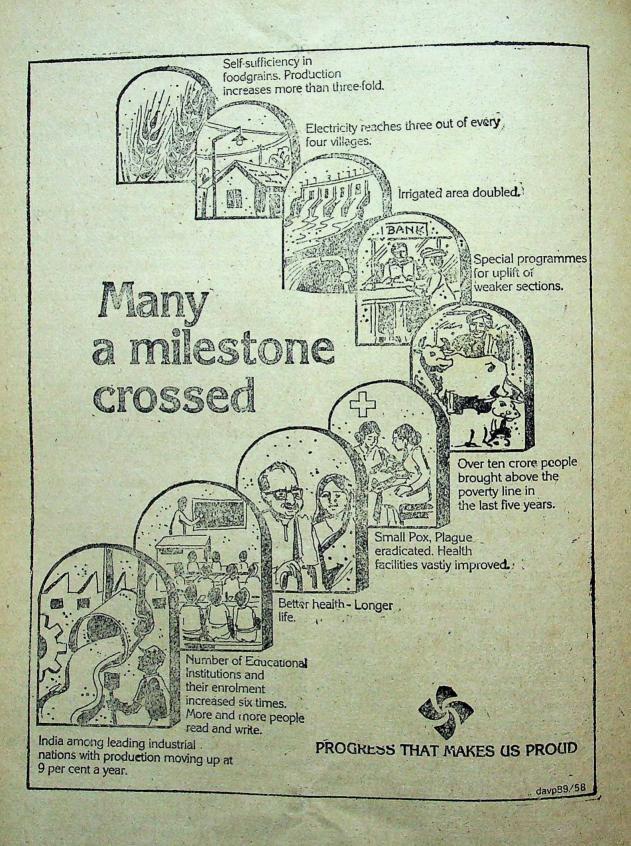
B.B. Vohra: Big Dams

(Contd. from page 12)

which have been already lost to it. We should, at the same time, pay greater attention to problems of land management, soil and water conservation and afforestation on a truly national scale so that the total amount of water available to the community may increase rapidly and at minimum cost across the length and breadth of the country — and not merely in the few million hectares commanded by BD projects — by enhancing the quantity of water retained as soil moisture and groundwater.

Such an approach has been so far resisted with great success by the BD lobby, which may be "resource illiterate" but certainly knows which side its bread is buttered. But however well-entrenched this lobby may be, it cannot fly in the face of incontrovertible facts for all time. Hope lies in the prospect that an increasingly well-informed public opinion will expose and frustrate the designs of this lobby and hasten its demise. For the country has really no more money to pour down the drain.

(Courtesy: Indian Express)



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"Foreign Force Devalues Freedom": Premadasa

R. Premadasa, the Sri Lanka President, made a speech at the pinnacle unveiling ceremony at Chittavivekashramaya Temple, Wickremasinghapura, Battaramulla on June 1, 1989. In this speech he averred that the Indian Peace-Keeping Force should leave Sri Lanka by the end of July this year. As the speech has become a subject of controversy, in view of its topicality we are publishing here its full text.

—Editor

Today is the first day of the month of June or the month of Poson. Today is a very important day for all of us who are Sri Lankans. It was in the month of Poson that Sri Lankans became a civilised nation. We were able to learn and practice Buddha Dhamina because of Arahant Mahinda who arrived in Sri Lanka with the concurrence of King Dharmasoka. On the Poson Day we not only came to know about Buddhism but also we gave up weapons we had in our hands. King Devanampiyatissa on his way to the jungle for hunting deer, met Arahant Mahinda, listened to his sermon and came to know the noble doctrine of Lord Buddha after which the King dedicated himself to the principles of avihimsa (non-violence) giving up himsa (violence) on a Pova Day. Today is the beginning of that memorable month of Poson. Further, I saw the Leela calendar today. Important events of each day are mentioned in this calendar under the respective days. What is mentioned there for today is the bringing of the branch of the Sri Maha Bodhi by the Nun Sanghamitta in 247 BC during the reign of King Devanampiyatissa. This too adds to the importance.

Also, Gam-Udawa '89 is being inaugurated today at Mahiyangana. At the Mahiyangana Raja Maha Vihara, where the famous Mahiyangana Dagoba stands, a Pirith ceremony takes place tonight. Therefore, it is a great pleasure for all of us to have participated in a meritorious activity of this nature on this important day at this Chitta Vivekashramaya built by the Sri Sucharita Movement. Today is the day on which we can start paying homage to this Dagoba. Its pinnacle was laid by our Most Venerable Agga Maha Panditha Balangoda Ananda Maithreya Maha Nayaka Thera.

In a little while by opening this pinnacle our Mahanayake Thero will make it possible for all of us to worship it. This Chitta Viveksharamaya was established by Sri Sucharita Viyaparaya, to provide peace of mind to our people. We found that a place like this was necessary for us to get rid of various violent feelings, bad feelings, wrong feelings from our minds. We saw a place like this in England.

That is the Amarawathi Temple. It was Agga Maha Panditha Balangoda Ananda Maithreya Thero thought while the Maha Thero is going from country

to country preaching, teaching and practicing meditation, there should be a place in Sri Lanka also to get his advice, like this Chitta Vivekashramaya.

We established this Vivekashramaya on his advice and approval in this land of 16 acres. Chairman of Nawaloka Group, Deshabandu H.K. Dharmadasa, Mrs Dharmadasa and their family helped us in this venture. When I requested him he agreed to do all possible things. All these including the Sanghavasa, Dharmasalawa and this Chaitya were financed by him. Other members of the Sucharita Movement also helped in all possible ways. While appreciating all their good work, I confer merit on all of them.

You will see that this Chaitya is decorated with the six coloured Buddhist flag. I saw a similar decoration about six months back at the Thuparamaya Chaitya. It was done on the instructions and advice of late Maho Sumedha Thero. We are happy that we were able to decorate this Chaitva today with the coloured Buddhist flag in this manner. Large number of people helped us in this venture. Especially, a number of people from Moratuwa and Panadura helped us with this decoration. This is a decorative draping for the Chaitya. It can be removed when necessary. We got this Buddhist flag due to the efforts of Maha Upasaka Henry Olcutt who came from America. He was the creator of this six coloured Buddhist flag accepted by the whole world. This symbolises 'Budu Ras' emanating from the Lord Buddha. Therefore, we can think that 'Budu Ras' is coming out of the Chaitya.

We all try very hard in various ways to obtain peace of mind. We work, earn and do all these to have peace of mind. This is a period where there is no peace, not only in our country, but also in various other countries in the world. It is a period we all lack peace of mind. When we think of the various violent incidents happening today in our country, it is difficult to have any peace of mind.

But it is only at a time like this we really need the peace of mind. Lord Buddha taught us how to control our mind. He has taught us how to control our thoughts and feelings.

It is at a time like this that we can get the guidance, advice and assistance from the *Dhamma* taught by the Lord Buddha. We need such guidance and advice specially at a time when we face disturbances and violence. The unity of the people was

crept into the minds of the people. The situation continues without any change. Everyone is praying and hoping that peace and tranquility would be

restored in the country.

Buddha Dhamma teaches us that we cannot? achieve peace by resorting to arms. Lord Buddha has taught us that peace and kindness cannot be achieved by wars, creating violence and disturbances. He has shown us through example of incident which took place during his time how we can achieve peace. Lord Buddha has taught us to achieve peace not through arms but by understanding that comes through kindness, compassion, forebearance, consultation and compromise.

Many sections of our society were pitched into many disputes and conflicts because they failed to solve various disputes and conflicts through discussion and exchange of views among themselves. This situation took a serious turn, when certain sections took a hasty decision to resort to violence to solve

their problems.

What was the result? Our country was engulfed in conflicts. The people were gripped by fear and doubt. When the country is wraught with conflicts and the people gripped with fear it would result in the disruption of peace and unity. It will also pose a threat to the independence, sovereignty and unitary character of the country. When we ourselves do not have the strength to solve our problems, when we harm ourselves by injuring and killing each other with arms, outside forces could easily override us. We are a nation which had been under colonial/rule for four hundred and fifty years. We were able to regain independence shedding colonial rule because all sections of the people were united, irrespective of race and religion.

If we divide ourselves, fight among ourselves, armed with weapons, and kill our own people, our freedom will disappear and we will again become a

subject nation. We must remember this.

These days many people ask me when the Indian Peace-Keeping Force will leave our country. We must reflect on the reasons that made the Indian Peace-Keeping Force to come here. One reason was that we took up arms to fight among ourselves to solve our problems. I like to state at this moment that the Indian Peace-Keeping Force has started moving out. This commenced when I became the President. You may remember that I told you during the presidential election campaign that when I become the President I will take steps to send the Indian Peace-Keeping Force out of the country.

I like to state that even before I made this request, Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi started pulling them out. His High Commissioner met me told me that they knew the promise I had made and that it should be kept. He told me that they are prepared to fall in line. He further told me that they will take them back in stages. India responded even before I requested them. I was very happy about it. I was grateful to Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and the Indian Government for making arrangements to take the Indian Army back. Already between 7000 to 8000 soldiers have left Sri Lanka. Now

disrupted due to various incidents. The process and them hack early All of us must send them back early. All of us must assist in this

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At a time when the foreign force which came here is moving out from our motherland we must work with patience. We must not become violent, Having a foreign force in an independent country is a slur on its self-respect. It devalues the freedom of the country. At this moment we must work peacefully and patiently. We must expedite departure. I will inform India about it in a day or

India sent this Peace-Keeping Force to restore peace in the North and the East at the request of our former President. We all know that India has repeatedly assured us that anytime the President of Sri Lanka were to make a request they will take their forces back. They started pulling them back even before I told them. I intend to ask India to take their forces back. It has become a necessity now. Even recently Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi has said that they will be pulling out the Peace-Keeping Force from Sri Lanka. The Indian Government has assured us that they will do so at any time we want.

We must remember an important incident that happened during the recent past. We must not forget that a number of groups who were directing an armed struggle have come into the democratic process. In July the Indian Peace-Keeping Force will be completing two years in our country. In fact the IPKF which came to restore peace had to engage in fighting. We all know that a large number of Indian soldiers also died as a result. Some suffered serious injuries. Their kith and kin have become

orphans.

It is not only the soldiers of the Indian Peace-Keeping Force who died. Many of the soldiers of the Sri Lanka Army as well as police officers who proceeded to the Northern and Eastern provinces to restore peace in those provinces had to sacrifice their lives. Their families and children have become orphans and are really suffering. A large number of persons who served in the Sri Lanka Army and the police are injured, disabled or deformed. They have been reduced to this plight in view of their commitment to preserve the unity and the integrity of our country. We are taking action to provide necessary assistance and relief to such orphaned families.

We know that children and the other members of these families are absolutely innocent persons who are in no way involved in any of these activities. They include members of all ethnic groups Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims and Burghers. Waves of crimes have swept across the country causing destruction, death and suffering to many. We are indebted to these brave servicemen. We should all pay our respects to them. Our Government is taking every possible action to grant relief and assistance to the affected families.

Now I would like to ask you the previous question again. What made the Indian Peace-Keeping Force to come to this land? Every one of us should ask this question ourselves, What made our soldiers and members of the public to pay with their lives? It is

our own conscience only that car answer this ques Keeping Force to this country at the request of our tion. We did not think of solving our internal problems peacefully and with mutual understanding. Failure to do so on our part has brought us to this plight. Therefore, we should ask ourselves whether we should allow ethnic, racial and parochial conflicts to continue further paving the path for external forces to intervene in the sovereignty of our motherland. Everyone of us should pay our attention to this aspect of the problem.

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Why can't we come to a settlement through mutual discussions and negotiations? On a day like today it is quite appropriate to make such a firm resolution. Today marks the dawn of Poson month. It is the month in which this country received the noble gift of the doctrine of non-violence. On this great day we are gathered here to participate in this

supreme religious ceremony. If we are determined, we could make this entire month free from violence and pave the way to discuss our problems. I am prepared to discuss with anyone about these problems. If there is any matter to be attended to by the Government, I will myself direct negotiations on this matter. We are also prepared to hold discussions peacefully after laying down arms. They could even keep the arms during such discussions but not use them. This sacred month of Poson is the best time for such a move. It is our duty to act boldly to solve our problems ourselves. If we don't our future generations will undoubtedly condemn us and brand us as traitors.

We are bringing disrepute to ourselves and our independence if we continue to keep a foreign army within our country because of conflicts among ourselves. It will also be an act of treachery perpetrated on our country. Therefore, I intend as I started earlier to expedite the withdrawal of the IPKF. I hope to make such a request soon to Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and to the Indian Government. The Indian Government and the Indian Prime Minister are awaiting a request from me and the Government to carry out such a troop withdrawal. We are thankful to the Indian Government for starting the withdrawal of the IPKF troops even before we had requested them to do so. What I would be requesting now would be to expedite the withdrawal of the IPKF.

The end of July 1989 will mark two years since IPKF came to Sri Lanka. Therefore, I will request the Indian Government to try as far as possible to complete the withdrawal of the entirety of the IPKF troops by the end of July. I would like to see the last of the IPKF troops leave Sri Lanka by the end of July. Today there are about 45,000 IPKF troops in Sri Lanka; therefore, it is not possible to withdraw them in a day or two.

They have to leave by ship. Therefore, I believe that if the troops withdrawal is expedited it would be Possible to complete the withdrawal by end of July. We will never forget the assistance and help given by the Indian Government to Sri Lanka. Even the Buddha Dhamma was a gift from India. It was Emperor Dharmasoka who took steps to establish Buddhism in Sri Lanka.

While it was a great help to have sent the Peace-

former President, recalling the Peace-Keeping Force back to India will also help us greatly at this moment. India's action to call back the Peace-Keeping Force during the next two months will be considered as a favour. I have no doubt that India will do so. I hope to make a friendly request to that effect shortly.

There is another reason as to why the Peace-Keeping Force should be taken out of this country. Last year's SAARC Conference was scheduled to be held in Sri Lanka. However, as you are already aware, it could not be held here owing to the uncertainities that prevailed in this country at the time. Hence the Conference was held in Pakistan. This year's Conference has to be held in Sri Lanka. It is our duty to do so and we have assumed this responsibility and we must fulfil it. This Regional Association has been formed by India, Pakistan, Bangladesh Nepal, Bhutan, Maldives and Sri Lanka; the seven independent South Asian countries. We must strengthen our regional co-operation. Leader of Governments of these countries will arrive in Sri Lanka in November this year. We must hold this Conference at high level. It would help the strengthening of friendship among neighbouring countries. It is the duty of our country to strengthen activities of SAARC.

My Government is already in the process of making arrangements for the event. We must accord a cordial and honourable welcome to the leaders of the Governments of the South Asian region. They are all our friendly countries. These countries are bound together culturally. people are eagerly waiting to welcome these leaders. We hope to accord cordial and rousing welcome to all the heads of state and the heads of government including Prime Minister Gandhi. However, how can Sri Lanka host such a Summit with self-respect when a foreign army is operating in the country? This time it is also not possible to do away with it. We must hold this Conference as an independent and sovereign country.

It is also because of this reason that I thought that it is extremely essential that the entirety of the IPKF be withdrawn by the end of July. We as an independent country must have the self-confidence to play our role as equal partners and work unitedly with other brother nations. You will admit that it is difficult for us to host and participate in such a Summit Conference while keeping a foreign Army in our country.

At a time when we are working to send back the IPKF troops to India, I would appeal to all not to say anything or act in a manner which will obstruct this move. Everyone who wishes to safeguard the sovereignty of the country should assist to make this programme a success by desisting from violence and provocative action.

You are aware that it is because of our own faults, disputes amongst us, our own provocative actions and our own militant actions that resulted in a foreign army coming to our country. But this is what people of all communities, Sinhala, Tamil, Muslim and Burgher say now: "We might well be grateful to which came to keep the peace had to wage a war itself. As a result, a large number of its members too lost their lives. But the problem is very much still with us. Now we have had enough of this peace-keeping by the IPKF. Now let us sort out our problems ourselves. Let us do everything possible to help the early withdrawal of the IPKF."

You will realise the type of confusion that will prevail if we escalate violence and disturbances. I am confident that everyone who honestly wishes to see that the IPKF troops are withdrawn will see to it that they do not indulge in violence or provocative

I would appeal to all to make a firm resolution to act with patience and desist from violence during these two months. Let us be determined to send back the IPKF troops, maintain our self-respect and host the forthcoming SAARC Summit with selfrespect and dignity as a free and sovereign State. It is our duty on a day like this to resolve to desist from violence and provocative actions. As I stated earlier, this month of Poson marks the defeat of violence and the triumph of non-violence.' I consider it as

India for sending this Army to help us. Digitized by Apra Sanah Foundation Chefip and the for sending this Army to help us. The such a meritorious act on the day of the day in such a meritorious act on the day of the dawn of the month of Poson.

You are all aware that our Agga Maha Pandit Most Venerable Balangoda Ananda Maithreya Maha Nayake Thero, is a world reputed scholar and selfdisciplined Bhikku. He has devoted his entire life to the upliftment of the Buddha Sasana.

On the strength of the merit acquired by the Maha Nayake Thero, I appeal to every ethnic group of this country to give up differences of all kinds and to pave the way for the dawn of a peaceful era. With that appeal I most respectfully invite our Maha Nayake Thero to uncover the pinnacle and provide us with the opportunity of paying homage to this Dagoba.

I wish to conclude by paying my tribute once again to Desabandhu H.K. Dharmadasa, Mrs Dharmadasa and their children who generously contributed to have this Dagoba constructed and to all others including the Sucharita Movement who helped in no small way to make this venture a success.

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N.C.: Contours of China Crisis

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had the open support of many distinguished personages: 12 members of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress; four leaders of non-Communist parties; ten university presidents - all urging the authorities to open a dialogue with the students, while a number of armed forces Generals appealed against the use of armed forces against student demonstrators.

Where are the seeds of counter-revolution? There was no doubt pro-American feeling among the student demonstrators. That was mainly because in the last few years, thousands of Chinese students were sent by the Chinese Government for training in US institutes and campuses. Their ideas of democracy were naturally coloured by what they had seen and felt in the USA. Even the Goddess of Liberty which they set up at Tiananmen was a replica of the Statue of Liberty in New York; however, this Statue was not the symbol of US imperialism, but of democratic aspirations of the American people.

It is through forceful media drive, the Party leadership blacked out everything about the students, doled out blatant lies that there were no deaths of students and citizens at Tiananmen Square as a result of the military action - a claim which is totally contradicted by eye-witness accounts and pictures taken on the spot. On the other hand, the official Chinese media has been plugging hard the line that only the PLA soldiers were killed in large numbers by counter-revolutionaries.

This propaganda about counter-revolutionary conspiracy in China has a familiar ring for the present writer. In the winter of 1956, when he visited Budapest he came back with the definite impression about the Hungarian people's national urge for independent identity which had been ruthlessly sought to be smothered by Stalin's minions who were then the bosses in the Hungarian Communist Party and Government. But the die-hard Stalinists in Budapest called the mass uprising a "counterrevolutionary" conspiracy - and they were backed by hardliners in Peking at the time and also the ones in Moscow fighting against Khrushchev. Life has proved that their myth about counter-revolution could not deceive history as the Hungarian Communists now admit with candour and responsibility. In the case of China, this mythology can hardly hold as the Party itself is divided on the issue, and Deng's patched-up quilt can hardly protect his regime.

Once, the Kuomintang under Sun Yat-sen over threw the effete imperial order. In turn, Maoism succeeded because it confronted and overthrew another cruel and effete order represented by the Kuomintang under Chiang Kaishek. Perhaps the hour has now arrived when the new forces, the new revolutionary zeal for democracy will triumph over the decrepit Maoism. No matter all the prattle about the threat of "counter-revolution" by the old men and old-world outlook of the present Maoist mandarin leadership at Beijing, we are today witness to the agonising birthpangs of a new revolutionary democratic China. The wave of New Thinking that is sweeping over the entire Communist world can hardly leave China untouched.

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South Asian View of Japan

SUBHASH CHANDRA SARKER

JAPAN: CENTREPIECE OF THE WORLD. By A.K.N. Ahmed. Mowla Brothers, 39 Bangla Bazar, Dhaka 1000, Bangladesh, 1989, pp xi + 128; Taka 160.00 (\$ 9.95).

Japan is emerging as a world power — economic and military. Japan has already emerged as the world's biggest creditor nation, having replaced the USA, which in turn has become the world's biggest borrower nation. Reflecting its growing economic strength, Japan is soon expected to move up from the fifth position in the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to the second position, ahead of France, West Germany and the UK, next only to the USA. And it is fast coming up in the military field as well. Japan's prosperity has been built with the active help of the USA, which remains the principal market for languages goods, and Westers Frances.

Japanese goods, and Western Europe.

However, with increasing competition in those countries Japan has to turn to new areas to maintain, and if possible to further, its pre-eminent economic position. China and India with their large markets have provided attraction to Japan. With China facing extraordinary economic difficulties in its bid to implement the policy of liberalisation, the glitter of China as a place for foreign investment has tended to dim somewhat. To that extent the countries of South Asia - principally Bangladesh, Pakistan and India - have acquired greater attractiveness in Japanese eyes. India is turning to Japan increasingly, although the Japanese presence in the Indian economy still remains insignificant compared to that of the USA and the UK. Yet the fact remains that the Japanese role has been increasing.

Although it would seem natural that Indians would take an active interest in studying the Japanese situation, Japan being an Asian nation and also proving an example of spectacular economic growth within a short span of time, Indian studies of Japan and the Japanese are very limited. If the Indian Government has been turning more and more towards Japan, one must know what Japan is and how the Japanese economy works. To be sure, there is no dearth of books in English on Japan -Written by the Americans — and these are very good books. Yet, as anyone even slightly acquainted with international writing knows, the writings of most scholars and journalists on foreign countries are highly coloured by the dictates of the national The The United by the dictions alists concerned. The priorities and areas of interest for the Indians quite different from those of the rich developed

countries. The usefulness of foreign studies on Japan is thus strictly limited for Indians.

The book under discussion is also not written by an Indian. In fact it is written by a well-known banker and diplomat of Bangladesh. If this publication still merits closer attention by Indians it is because the author, coming from a country of South Asia, decidedly reflects the regional outlook which is not far different from what an Indian, or for that matter, a Pakistani, may take. As any reader of this book can see, A.K.N. Ahmed is a great champion of the South Asian economic and political development and cooperation. Ahmed makes this point explicit in his Introduction to the volume. "On the regional plane, South Asian countries, particularly in the Indian sub-continent, should build up a strategy, preferably a joint one, to ensure that Japan focusses more attention on them so that they are able to extract maximum benefit from the new posture that Japan is going to take." (page ix).

The distinctive aspect of this slim study is that it discusses some less well-known aspects of Japanese life — the military build-up, the Japanese religious system and its implications, the Japanese outcasts, Japanese trading companies, Japanese—US trade war, Japanese overseas investment and Japan's relations with developing countries. In other words, within the covers of this book is to be found a presentation of the Japanese situation as it affects India and other developing countries of South Asia and may affect

them in the days to come.

Having been Bangladesh's Ambassador in Japan for three years till the end of 1987 the author, a former Governor of the Central Bank of Bangladesh and an international banker, had an ample opportunity to study the contemporary Japanese situation and policies. The chapters in the book testify to the fact that the author did avail himself of that opportunity. His is an objective appraisal motivated by the desire to seek opportunity to build up cooperation between the poor countries of Asia and Japan. His analytical approach is highly helpful for the readers to follow the Japanese development.

"Although the Japanese direct investment in Asia has been going down, the larger share of such investment is being directed towards Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan leaving very little for the Indian subcontinent. For example, total Japanese investment in India amounted to just 132 projects worth \$ 103 million from 1979 to 1986. This is only 0.1 per cent of Japan's total foreign direct investment over that period, and less than 0.5 per cent of its investment in Asia. In the year ending March 1986, there has been net decline of Japanese direct

per cent), Thailand (--60 per cent), Brunei (-80 per and other countries including India (-50 per cent), he writes. Logically, he discounts any possibility of a great surge in Japanese direct investment in the countries of South Asia.

The chapter on Burakumin - the Japanese outcasts - is illuminating. The three million Burakumins are subject to numerous acts of discrimination by the Japanese, despite the fact that discrimination against Burakumins remains illegal since 1871 (the phenomenon of law remaining infructuous is all too well-known to Indians). They are looked down upon as eta (heavily polluted) or binin (non-human).

The Japanese are going in a big way towards a military build-up. The earlier restriction that no more than one per cent of the Japanese GDP could be spent on Defence was done away with by the Nakasone Ministry in 1987-88. To be sure the Japanese military build-up is not known by its proper name because under Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution, Japan is not to become an armed power and has to remain a neutral power. The United States Government was to provide, and did provide for more than four decades, comprehensive security for Japan to enable Japan to remain a nonmilitary power. No doubt the freedom from sizeable military expenditure for many years helped the Japanese economic growth. Of late the US has sought to persuade the Japanese Government to

investment in China (-12 per cent), Malaysia (-44, spend more and eDercence so that the US, already affected by a recurring deficit in current account, could reduce its external commitments. The US Government has been providing all the support to enable Japan to emerge as a military superpower.

Ahmed discusses the implications of re-emergence of Japan as a military power for the countries of Asia. Unless other countries come up economically and militarily the situation would cause anxiety to the people of Asia. "Once India becomes a strong regional power, once another strong bloc emerges under the leadership of China and once ASEAN nations gather more strength of their own, Japan as a regional military power will not be able to flex her muscle too much posing military threat to this area.....", he writes (pp. 11, 12).

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To the economically poor nations of Asia, Japan could also serve as a model of how borrowed technology could be utilised by a nation to build up its own independent economic strength - a feat that has eluded India so far. While over the past four decades Japan has built up an economic strength to offer challenge to the established industrial countries of North America and Western Europe in their home territories, India continues to be pathetically dependent on foreign technology, practically in all areas of industrial development and thus remains dangerously vulnerable to external manipulation by foreigners.

Mazhar Ali: Mujahideen & Women

(Contd. from page 4) the downfall of Najibullah, and the entry of Hikmatyar, or whoever else they prefer - but that has not happened, and now there are doubts and second thoughts. In fact US diplomats, intelligence officers and journalists have been generally incorrect in their analysis of Afghanistan because they began believing their own propaganda, which equated the Afghan PDPA with the corrupt South Vietnamese administration during the Vietnam war. Harrison, probably the only US journalist who had the correct knowledge of Afghan affairs, says that Americans know very little about the Kabul Government, and the State Department's analyses are based on misinformation provided by their own representatives. According to Selig Harrison, in the Wall Street Journal of May 4, journalists just sat back in the Peshawar Intercontinental Hotel, doing nothing. One network correspondent was dining when he was asked to file a story urgently to New York. He went out and concocted some completely phony footage.

All those who suggested that mujahideen leaders were fanatics, or bandits active in trafficking heroin westwards to American consumers, or had committed terrible atrocities were either ignored on suppres-Now some of the less savoury details are being given wider coverage. The February 20 issue of Newsweek carried the terrible stories related by Soviet veterans of how rebels sexually mutilated live prisoners or slit the skin around their waists, pulling it up as though it were a shirt.

Mujahideen attitudes towards women are even

mujahideen leaders what the status of women would be if they came to power. There was no reply. We have never hesitated to say that we stand with the PDPA Government because it has raised the status of women, opened schools for adult education, given rights to trade unions and shown serious interest in the uplift of the common man.

We are for peace — against the armament race, against all nuclear weapons. We want money spent on development, not arms. We want friendship with all neighbours, we whole heartedly welcome the Sino-Soviet rapproachment because it will improve the world situation. We do not want Afghan blood to be shed merely to please American imperialism. We demand an all-parties Conference in Afghanistan, and an immediate end of bloodshed. We demand the release of Soviet prisoners of war, so that they can return to their families,

I end with Badshah Khan's wisdom, and his longing to achieve dignity for the Pathans.

have one great dream, one great longing. Like flowers in a desert my people are born, bloom for a while with pole at the people are born, but the people are born and the people are born at the people are bor while with nobody to look after them, wither and return to the dust they came from. I want to see them share each others sorrows and beautiful to see them share each others sorrows and beautiful to see them work others sorrows and happiness. I want to see them work together as account together as equal partners. I want to see them play their national role and take their rightful place among the nations of the world, for the service of God and humanity. Let us pay heed to these

Let us pay heed to these words, let us listen to the voice of sanity, let us pay homage to Badshah Khan by embracing each other, loving each other, creating an atmosphere of affection and peace, justice and understanding, forgiveness and friendship. Let us behave like dignified human beings, as Badshah Khan wanted us to be to

Khan wanted us to conduct ourselves. worse. Our organisation in an open letter asked our world for justice, peace and friendship.

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Technology and Religion

THIS is with reference to Asghar Ali Engineer's article "Renaissance and Process of Nation-Building" (Mainstream, April 8). Asghar's is an exceptionally brilliant article which, I feel, should stimulate social philosophers and activists to reflect on the anatomy of contemporary modes of living and

evolve a new vision for the coming era.

The fact is that India is a perpetual paradox. It saddens our minds, depresses us; yet, it moves us, inspires us. Indeed, we live in troubled times. But we hear a call: the journey that Raja Rammohan Roy initiated and to which Vivekananda and Gandhi gave a new momentum ought to continue. Well, what Asghar is saying is nothing new; but his article is a reminder: it tells us forcefully that India requires a new renaissance and change-makers should not overlook what is peculiarly specific to India.

Broadly speaking, there are two fundamental points on which Asghar has focused his attention: (a) how to locate modern technology in its proper perspective and (b) how to reinterpret religion. It is difficult to escape these questions because if we intend to create a new India we have to evolve a refreshingly innovative vision of progress capable of transcending all apparent dualities like science versus religion, technology versus cultural identity, nationa-

lity versus ethnicity, unity versus plurality.

Asghar is right in arguing that while there is no escape from modern technology we should, however, be critical enough to see its discontents. Technology is not solely liberating; beneath it lies modern man's narcissism — his willingness to transform nature into an object of manipulation and ultimately treat an essentially humane ... living universe as an objectivied, reified world. The bigness of technology, if not resisted with sufficient moral courage, desensitises, dehumanises people. It is a language of the rich and the powerful. Far from creating a truly liberating, society it further adds to the intensity of oppression.

The paradox of technology is that it evolves its own rationality; it refuses to remain simply a tool for liberation with which man plays, sings and dances. From Technology to Technocracy — a strange metamorphosis having its own myth that requires a new Karl Marx to explore its falsehood. Technocracy is anti-political, anti-ideological. It assumes that every problem — from unemployment to poverty to conjugal conflict — is primarily a technical problem and technocrats alone can offer a packaged" solution.

It is at this juncture that we should apprehend the coming danger: how Technocracy as a worldview fascinates modern India's ruling elites. Bring computers. Bring new gadgets. And Rajiv Gandhi and Sam Pitroda would take you to the 21st century — a new Scientific and Science fiction for Doon School kids. The result is Obvious. While the members of the emerging middle class run after innumerable varieties of TV sets,

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refrigerators and detergent powder, the unfortunate ones continue to live in slums and dark villages. Technology oppresses. Violence spreads. Neurosis prevails. The vision of an egalitarian nation-state crumbles.

Another point on which Asghar has focussed his attention is religion. One thing is certain. In India there is no escape from religion: it ought to be understood and integrated with modern India's noble aspirations for democracy, socialism and equality. And why should the progressives abhor religion? Religion can act like a truly liberating force; it reminds us of the danger implicit in modern man's It unfolds love, compassion. every philosophy has got its contradictions (even a humanistic philosophy like Marxism can give birth to Stalinism); but the task of a dialectician is to learn from its liberating aspects. Religion is not solely what fundamentalists or RSS lists or RSS militants Religion once inspired young are practicing. a bright young man from Calcutta called Narendra Nath Dutta to move around the world and preach the message of love and action. And religion once enabled a Gujarati bania to evolve a new way to fight the West, the imperial West. Not to learn from liberating elements of religion is to allow fundamentalists to distort our minds. This is a price that the progressives can hardly afford to pay. And in almost all his writings Asghar has been consistent about it. Religion, says Asghar, need not be condemned; it ought to be humanised to defeat society's evil forces who trivialise religion, distort it, use it for their morbidly violent aims.

What we should remember is that new ideas are coming; old paradigms that once brought Enlightenment, under changed circumstances, no longer seem liberating. Fritzof Capra is talking about a new turning-point; he is visualising a possibility of science - not mechanistic Newtonian-Cartesian science, but a new science - embracing religion and ancient wisdom. Ivan Illich is speaking of "convivial tools" - the tools that, instead of dominating man's psyche, would liberate him. Then, why should we remain blind? As a matter of fact, we can learn a lot from our past, from all those who fought the West and gave a new meaning to their cultural heritage. From Raja Rammohan Roy to Mahatma Gandhi - attempts have been made to reconcile modern rationality and spirituality, unity and plurality. We have, however, forgotten the path. That is our tragedy. But the message comes: we must alter our destiny: we require a new renaissance. Asghar has been writing about it. One hopes it stimulates the Marxists (I am talking about the Marxists because they have not yet exhausted their possibilities: they can transform our, society) to think and think with an open mind about the twin problems of technology and religion. .

May 13, 1989

Dr. Avijit Pathak (on behalf of PROTECTION — a forum of ordinary people telling extraordinary stories) A7/32, Sheesh Mahal Colony Kamachha, Varanasi, U.P.

Mirroring a Unique Relationship

G. KRISHNA MOHAN RAO

In the beginning of 1988 an old man was given a paper and a pen and was asked to attempt a cartoon. He was not given a name or a theme for the cartoon. The pen was shakily held by the old man and he drew. It was a caricature of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. And the old man none other than India's celebrated cartoonist Shankar.

The 85 year old Shankar Pillai is cariously ill and can

The 85 year old Shankar Pillai is seriously ill and can hardly speak. He lives in distant Kerala.

An exhibition of nearly 500 original cartoons on Pandit Nehru by Shankar was recently organised in New Delhi by the Cabinet Secretariat, the Implementation Committee for Nehru Centenary and the Children's Book Trust. The irony is that Shankar was usualized of the arbibition of his cartoons. is that Shankar was unaware of the exhibition of his cartoons.

The cartoons on display give an insight into the politics of the Nehruvian era (from 1948 to 1964) projecting problems like the Kashmir issue, communalism, the division of States on linguistic basis etc., and bringing into focus various facets of our foreign policy, planning, Constitution-making etc., that sought to meet the challenges before the nation after independence. His simple caricatures provide a critical analysis of Nehru's stewardship of the free country in its fledgling years.

Shankar began his career as a cartoonist with The Hindustan Times in 1932. His scathing attack of the British rulers and their regime caught the attention of leaders of the freedom struggle, particularly Nehru. In a foreword to a collection of Shankar's cartoons that *The Hindustan Times* brought out in 1937, Nehru wrote: "How many of us waited from day to day for Shankar's cartoons? How many of us turned to the page of The Hindustan Times containing his cartoon before we have

seen the news of the day? ..

The two met in 1939 for the first time in Geneva and a long and enduring friendship developed between them.

To Shankar the image and personality of Panditji has been the focal point of his thought-process. Shankar has caught

Nehru in different moods - happy, pensive, melancholic; no other cartoonist had made a single statesman his central theme as Shankar did. However, Shankar never allowed his admira tion for Nehru to cloud his judgement.

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When Nehru was called upon to release the first issue of the Shankar's Weekly in 1948, he jocularly remarked at the public ceremony: "Don't spare me, Shankar." The cartoons that were on view indicated that Shankar took Nehru's humorous advice seriously. Several of his cartoons brought out the inherent weaknesses of Nehru as a human being and as a statesman. In many caricatures he severely criticised our first Prime Minister's position on various issues as well as his style of functioning. But Nehru always accepted the bitter criticism in the true spirit.

A democrat to the core, Nehru never got flustered. On the contrary, he once observed: "We are apt to grow pompous and self-centered, and it is good to have the veil of our conceit torn occasionally."

Shankar was also highly creative in his sketches of personalities who were Nehru's cabinet colleagues. The temperamental traits and activities of Sardar Patel, T.T. Krishnamachari, Dr B.C. Roy, V.K. Krishna Menon, K.D. Malaviya, Morarji Desai, Gulzari Lal Nanda, Lal Bahadur Shastri are best revealed in Shankar's drawings.

He chronicled events without ever being malicious or overstepping the limits of humour. As Nehru has said about Shankar "without the least bit of malice or ill-will he points out, with an artist's skill, the weaknesses and foibles of

those who display themselves on the public stage".

The exhibition mirrored the warm and unique relationship that existed between Shankar and Nehru. While Nehru admired Shankar as a cartoonist, Shankar was attracted by the essential humanity of Nehru, he still is. In fact Nehru left an indelible imprint on Shankar's memory that found reflection in the creativity of the artist.

Raja Mohan: Sino-Soviet Summit

(Contd. from page 6)

been reluctant to allow a quick and dramatic movement in the relationship. However, this in no way detracts from the enormous significance of the summit. The very normalisation of the relationship has a number of strategic consequences, altering the very dynamics of Asian relations.

A misreading

Before the consequences are examined, it is necessary to note the assertion of both Beijing and Moscow that the normalisation would not affect the relations of either party with third countries. Given the extensive Chinese links with the West and the obvious caution of Beijing in dealing with Moscow, the West is confident in accepting the Chinese assurances. But some Indian analysts have drawn attention to the implications of an assertion in the Joint Communique that "neither side would use or threaten to use arm's against the other by any means, including the use of territorial land, water, or air space of a third country bordering on the other side".

These analysts have argued that the assertion possibly nullifies the security provisions of the Indo-Soviet treaty. But this is a misreading of both the Indo-Soviet Treaty and the Sino-Soviet Communique. The 1971 Indo-Soviet Treaty, in Article IX, calls for abstaining from assistance to a third party that engages in an armed conflict with either of the

treaty partners. It also calls for immediate mutual consultations in the event of being subjected to an attack or threat of an attack. The Communique in no way affects this and is a clear reference to the Soviet military presence in Mongolia and Vietnam. If the Soviet Union pursues its present policy to its logical end, there would be no Soviet military presence outside its borders at the end of a few years.

The consequences of the Summit cannot be seen in terms of a zero sum game. The rapprochement has occurred in the context of a fundamental reordering of great power relations in the world and a major transformation of Asian relations. The normalisation of the Sino-Soviet relationship marks the end of a phase in Asian relations when the hostility between Beijing and Moscow was the central reality. Moscow has now broken through the comprehensive coalition built against it by Washington since the late 1970s. By placing its ties with China on a healthy basis; it is now free to pursue wide ranging relations across the board in Asia, strengthening old ties and building new ones. The United States, grappling with its own relative economic decline, is under pressure to redefine its relations with traditional friends and adversaries in Asia.

Deng and Gorbachev

The Sino-Soviet rapprochement signals the end of the schism among the Communist states in Asia, leading to a normalisation of China's ties with Mon-

golia, Vietnam and other Indon Gibinesse Asta teamal Hotheatiora Cheng Birdheart instructions over the past few weeks in Korean peninsula, the prospects of reduction in tensions have brightened. In South-East Asia, the traditional hostility between Indo-China and the ASEAN is drawing to a close. On the sub-continent, the period during which the Sino-Soviet rivalry tended to exacerbate the regional tensions is perhaps

There is one more irony revealed by the Sino-Soviet summit and the tragic train of events in Beijing since then. Nearly four years ago, when Gorbachev came to power, the British magazine, The Economist, demanded to know: "Can Gorbachev do

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China has been: "Can Deng do a Gorbachev?" By its actions, the Chinese leadership has demonstrated that it is not yet prepared to begin the democratisation of the Chinese political system. The current tragedy in China is rooted in the stultifying "pragmatism" of the Chinese leadership, and its lack of a theory of internal political change and vision of a democratic international order. Pursuit of narrow economism at home and the balance of power politics abroad over the last decade has robbed the great nation of its creative potential and the powerful role it could play in reshaping the global order.

Mojumdar: Dam or People?

(Contd. from page 14)

the house is being submerged, it does not take both into consideration, though this will leave many with their fields but without their houses, while others are left at home, but without their source of income.

The nature of compensation that is being worked out is amply illustrated by the fact that the compensation for one tree has been calculated as Re 1, even though the annual income from a tree is Rs 600 to Rs 700; and this, apart from the timber value. The compensation for land is decided according to the quality of land; which in practice, amounts to influence. In village Tumbargha, five different rates of payment were given to land belonging to the same area. The rates varied from Rs 500 to Rs 18,000, depending on the influence of the person concerned. The bigger landowners of the area are therefore very eager to lose their land. Gair mazrua land - land which has been cultivated for generations, though unregistered — is being granted compensation. And, in the recent past, there have been a number of cases of land-grabbing by the rich farmers in a bid to rake in the compensation money.

Of the compensation given for houses and wells, some amount is deducted from the cost as deprecia-Any new construction work in that area is seen as an attempt to get compensation money, and therefore disregarded. The government, itself, following this policy, has stopped all development

work in that area since 1967.

The villagers, resenting above all displacement from their homes, have begun a resistance movement against the dam, which took concrete shape as the Auranga Jalashay Sangharsh Samiti in 1976-77. However, the movement was coopted by the local large landowners who undermined the interests of the movement. Bribed by the officials, they volunteered as contractors and signed compromising agreements on behalf of the Samiti. The villagers, however, succeeded in throwing out the corrupt leadership and holding fresh elections. The name was changed to "Visthapit Sangh" and, under the leadership of Nirmal Kumar Singh, assumed the shape of a people's movement. Singh, who did not seek high office and was only a Joint Secretary of the Sangh, devoted himself wholly to the cause, studying in depth not only the implications of this dam but also of other dams. He also researched the area and the development work done there.

The Sangh has evolved an alternative rehabilitation policy which has been presented to the Irriga-

tion Department. So far, however, all their demands have been dismissed as unreasonable. When approached, the attitude of the Irrigation Department was that their work lay in constructing the dam; and the welfare activities concerning the displaced should be the concern of the various welfare projects of the government.

The demands of the Visthapit Sangh include at least 50 per cent land for land compensation and employment reservation for the oustees. The Sangh also maintains that work on the dam must start only when the displaced have been rehabilitated.

As well as this, the Sangh has been fighting the Irrigation Department in a concerted effort all these years by obstructing all work carried out by them. At the inauguration of the project, they gheraoed the dais and presented their demands to the then Chief Minister. Later, they blocked the road leading to the dam site and prevented the Central Water Commission (CWC) team from continuing with the pit-work. The CWC team, however, despite not having completed its work, claims to have the required knowledge about the soil composition of the area. And, although the irrigation colony has been completed, the Sangh has not allowed anyone to move in there.

In May 1988, the Deputy Commissioner passed an order saying that all work on the dam must be stopped for the next two years. Though members of the Sangh were led to believe that this was due to their representations, an interview with the DC revealed that it was because of lack of funds.

On October 3, 1988, Nirmal Singh died of a heart attack which followed a bad bout of jaundice brought on by self-neglect. Yet the Sangh is proving its true nature as a people's movement by carrying on the work initiated by Nirmal Singh, despite the great loss. An "Auranga Dam Resistance National Conference" was held on November 26-28, 1988. In February this year Baba Amte was in Tumbagarha (one of the villages in the submergence area), in connection with his Bharat Jodo Abhiyan. The Sangh utilised this opportunity to organise another sammelan in which the Baba too participated.

Given all this, it will be wise on the part of the government to reconsider the project and research it in depth rather than going ahead in this blind and heedless fashion with the construction of the Auranga dam. What has so far remained a nonviolent movement should not need to turn to violence in order to make the authorities take notice of the voice of the people.





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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Towards Fiasco

Nor very long ago, in the early days of his term as Prime Minister, one used to hear about Rajiv Gandhi's special foreign policy approach towards India's neighbours. There were moments of excitement about establishing rapport with Pakistan's military dictatorship to the point of making the extraordinary claim that General Zia was "our best bet". There was bonhomic with another military dictator in our neighbourhood, and Rajiv Gandhi made a dramatic airdash to a cyclone-hit land's end in Bangladesh in the company of General Ershad, to which the aged former Sri Lankan President was also roped in. The high watermark of this policy was registered with the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement of July 29, 1987 — which was overpublicised by the Rajiv establishment as the historic Accord of the century, apart from other extravagant claims.

A significant feature of this strategy pursued under Rajiv Gandhi has been the total and exclusive reliance on the rulers of the neighbouring regimes none of which, barring the one in Colombo, had any democratic sanction of the people behind them. This was in marked contrast to the strategy pursued so long which, while dealing with the rulers, had never ignored or underplayed the importance of cultivating the public in the neighbouring countries, among whom there still persists active and strong democratic elements with records of friendship towards this country. By neglecting these friendly elements, New Delhi's policy towards neighbours as followed by Rajiv Gandhi has become vulnerable and liable to be misunderstood

by the public as a whole in these countries.

This one-track approach depends very much on the vagaries of the ruling establishment and their own narrow self-interests as distinct from the wider national interests of the countries concerned. The military junta in Pakistan, for instance, could be trusted to keep up a confrontational posture towards this country as part of its stock-intrade. The Bangladesh President, another General, could find it convenient to whip up anti-India jingoism to divert people's attention from the more pressing problems at home, beleaguered as he has been by the democratic pressure from massive political organisations opposed to him. Even the exodus of Chakma refugees across the frontier into north-east India bears out the psychological antipathy of the Ershad regime to amicably settle issues with India. The same can be said of the continuing dispute over the sharing of the river waters.

It is in this background that one has to take into account the deterioration of relations between India and Nepal. Repeatedly, the Rajiv Government takes the stand that its case is legally irrefutable with regard to the grievances of Nepal. It is no doubt tenable that India has a strong case purely legally and constitutionally. What is, however, missed is that Indo-Nepal relations are not based

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badly, it has to be admitted, as the world opinion seems to have tilted in favour of Kathmandu and against India. Internally, the people of Nepal, whose goodwill could safely be relied upon in the past, are this time by and large left exposed to the propaganda of the King and his court, to the extent that the shortages of essential supplies in Nepal have been brought about by the cussedness of the Indian authorities. Thus the King of Nepal could maintain an upper hand in misleading his own people to believe that India has been mainly responsible for the hardship and privations being suffered by them. In other words, India is already marked out as the villain of the piece. The result has been that we are left with very few articulate supporters of India in Nepal in the face of the strident campaign against India launched by the Palace circles. This itself is a serious reflection on our neglecting the democratic section of the Nepali public.

The protracted delay in breaking the deadlock with Nepal is thus an eloquent commentary on the fiasco of our policy towards Nepal. Much more serious is the current tension with Sri Lanka. Putting it briefly, one can very well ask the government how and why the euphoria generated two years ago over the Rajiv-Jayewardene Accord has totally vanished today. In fact, Jayewardene, for whose well-being and survival Rajiv rushed Indian troops to Sri Lanka in the first place, has been maintaining silence on the worsening crisis, making no intervention to defuse it despite the fact that it is

his party which is still in power in Colombo.

The irony of the present situation - a damaging commentary indeed on the fiasco of our policy - is that while the Indian troops were sent for the purpose of protecting the Tamil population, tyey have throughout been engaged in armed clashes with the foremost Tamil militant group in the island. Today, it is this militant Tamil group, the LTTE, which is engaged in peace talks with the Sri Lankan Government and has joined in a common chorus for the vacation of the

only on legal perception. They involve political very and decisions. On this score, India has suffered very badly it has to be admitted, as the world opinion seems regard to Sri Lanka. Whatever might be the plea that Rajiv Gandhi may trot out, the fact of the matter is that by the provisions of the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord of July 29, 1987, the Indian troops were despatched to Sri Lanka at the request of the Sri Lankan President, and have no locus standi whatsoever to stay put there once the President has made a public demand for their vacation of Sri Lankan soil.

It needs to be further reiterated that the Indian troops were specifically sent to Sri Lanka for the purpose of safeguarding the integrity of the Sri Lankan Republic. As for safeguarding the interest and security of the Tamil minority in the island, that is the responsibility of the Sri Lankan Government and the Government of India cannot arrogate to itself the responsibility of protecting any section of the population in another sovereign state unless specifically requested to do so by the government of the country concerned. Such an arrangement can of course be ensured by amicable under-standing between the governments of the two neighbouring countries and *not* by hectoring postures or threatening to do a Cyprus in Sri Lanka as some circles have begun to demand with the acquiescence — if not the tacit consent — of the Rajiv establishment. While such an idea may be hot stuff for election propaganda, one only hopes that wiser counsel will prevail since it is highly irresponsible to involve the Indian armed forces in such a game. It also needs to be said that if President Premadasa is pushed too far, he may seek the assistance of a multilateral force to help his government in ensuring peace and stability in his country, as did Sirimavo Bandaranaike in 1971, instead of relying solely on the Indian armed contingent. Such a development will bring neither credit to Rajiv Gandhi's government nor honour to our country.

The time has come for a sober appraisal of our government's policy towards our neighbours, instead of letting it be guided by juvenile impetuosity and suicidal short-sightedness.

COMMENTARY

Poland: Victory of Solidarity

THE resounding success of Solidarity in Socialist Poland has brought to the fore the significance of a highly interesting experiment launched by creative Marxists in the socialist world: multi-party democracy.

Solidarity swept the elections to the 100 member Senate (the Upper House, elections to which, unlike India, are direct as in the case of the Lower House) having won practically all the seats there and 160 of 161 seats reserved for independent candidates in the Sejm (the Lower House). And this momentous victory of Solidarity has been accompanied by a massive defeat for the ruling alliance led by the Polish United Workers' Party (PUWP, as the Communist Party is known in Poland). In fact General Jaruzelski, who headed the government coalition, openly conceded defeat which, he was truthful and cadid enough to admit, was "total".

The PUWP-led coalition is no doubt assured of a majority in the 60 member Sejm and thus there is no question of it being dislodged from power at this stage. defeat was transparent in Solidarity's landslide win in the Senate as well as the fact that 33 of the 35 top Communist leaders who were nominated to the list of unoppsed candidates and who had to get over 50 per cent votes for election in the first round failed to secure the requisite number of ballots cast. This happened because Solidarity ran a vigorous campaign not to vote for them. The success of Solidarity on this score is a measure of the strength of its roots among the people (though now there is some rethinking in Solidarity circles because all those Communist leaders who failed in the first round are dedicated reformers, and they this does not mean that the PUWP has been uprooted. It is doubtless humbled and humiliated, but not eliminated. Or else the candidate who fared worst in this list could not have received the support of 37 per cent of those who exercised their franchise (of the 27CC-million blooders a 162 Gentland cent participated in the elections).

Close observers of the Polish scene reject the view that this is a vote against socialism. Of course it is a vote of no-confidence against the PUWP-led coalition government for the manner in which it has mishandled the Polish economy that is still in deep crisis marked by galloping inflation, growing cost of living, yawning gulf between the well-offs and the worse-offs. But people interviewed in surveys and on TV categorically opposed a change of system because they were afraid of losing the social welfare benefits like free and compulsory education, free medical facilities, etc. that socialism

The results of the Polish elections are a clear verdict in favour of a new coalition government in which Solidarity must have a decisive role. Responding to the people's mood, the present government leadership has called for such an alliance. But Solidarity which is subjected to various pulls and pressures has rejected the call making it clear that it does not want to share the responsibility of running the country at

this stage. But it cannot ignore the mass aspirations for long.

Lech Walesa, the legendary leader of Solidarity, is displaying rare maturity at present. Commenting on the ongoing struggle for giving final shape to Poland's much-needed reforms, Walesa recently said: "Nobody will win in this struggle individually. Note that the should be s gle individually. Neither will it be won by those who shout:
'Down with Communists.'" That he is striving for a new line departing from the original course of confrontation with the Polish authorities in land to the course of confrontation with the polish authorities in land to the course of the Polish authorities is beyond dispute. Would he succeed? Poland's future depends on the answer to this query (which, however, would have to wait for sometime). In the meantime there are prospects a split both in Solidarity and the PUWP.

At a time when the image of socialism has been consider ably tarnished by the butchery in Beijing, the Polish experiment offers a possibility of proving that socialism is not in the leavest of the proving that the leavest of th is not in the least incompatible with democracy. The way out of the crisis in that country is only through constructive cooperation between the three major forces. Solidarity the Church. This forces: Solidarity, the Communists and the Church. was underlined eight years ago (at the time of the first manifestation of the crisis) by the editor of this journal after a tour of Poland for which reason he had then earned the wrath of our Mornita total deas. His wrath of our Marxist establishments steeped in old ideas. His observation carries more weight today as things have changed dramatically under the impact of Gorbachev's new thinking that accords priority to national and global interests over partistal priority to national and global interests.

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THE question of the IPKF's future illustrates the cruel The IPKF's return dilemmas of the Lankan situation. to India would expose vulnerable Tamil areas on the island to Sinhala extremists, and the unarmed Tamil citizen as well as the Provinicial Government of Perumal to the LTTE. A force maintaining order, even if incompletely, would be

making room for gun-toting intimidators.

If, however, the IPKF stays put, and especially if it does so against the wishes of the Lankan Government, there will be reprisals against the persons and properties of Lankan Tamils and Indians in Colombo, in the tea-gardens near Tamils and indians in Colombo, in the tea-gardens hear Kandy and in other Sinhala-majority areas. The pressure of circumstances could then suck the IPKF into central, western and southern Sri Lanka, turning the force into one of occupation. Indian soldiers and officials will pay heavily in sweat and blood for any policing of the whole of Sri is sweat and blood for any policing of the whole of Sri Lanka; the policing will have to be of long duration; and eventual withdrawal will expose to bitter revenge any Indian and Lankan Tamil interests that survive.

Withdrawal would be the lesser evil and also conform to international law but it would involve the casting away of a government that was billed as a visible and valuable fruit of a supposedly historic Accord. Reflection ought surely to take place when things reach such a pass but we are living in blighted times that do not allow the lessons of history to interfere with the buying and selling of votes, licences and permits. Still, I offer for what they are worth some thoughts for those who care for Lanka's peoples and for India's

relations with her southern neighbour

Had their offers not been so little or so late, successive Governments in Ceylon or Sri Lanka could have pacified their Tamils with half of what they have been willing to give in recent times. Had the Buddhist clergy and vocal Sinhala citizens been less chauvinistic, the Government of Sinhala citizens been less chauvinistic, the Government of Sri Lanka would have made better offers to the Tamils. If in earlier decades popular Tamil leaders had been more united, the initiative would not have passed to the LTTE or similar bodies. If popular Sinhala leaders had been less divided in their field, the JVP could not have seized the

Many Indians made and still make the error of thinking that only the Tamils of Lanka are our concern. Not that very many Indians actually think of the Lankan Tamils; our indifference has been quite large. Yet the plight of the Tamils does arouse at least the verbal of sympathy of Indians. This is quite. This is quite natural, just as it would be natural for us, were we thinking of Malaysia, to be more concerned with its Indians than with its Malays or Chinese.

But when such sentiments are allowed to dictate policy, trouble results — trouble that causes the very people for whom we have sympathy to suffer. It would not be unnatural for the for the people of Pakistan to have a soft corner for the Muslims of India, but were this sympathy to be made the orner-stone of Pakistan's policy towards India, the Muslims

of India might easily become the policy's worst victims.

The pro-Tamil thrust of India's Lankan policy has tended to make the Lankan majority and the Lankan authorities anti-Indian and more suspicious of their Tamils. The help llargely covert but in some cases overt as well) that was given by the Indian and Tamil Nadu Governments to militant Tamil groups was an aspect of this pro-Tamil thrust, which of course is as a continuous of Indian sentiis as much an off-shoot of Indian politics as of Indian sentiment. Instead of working for as sound a relationship as possible with all the peoples of Sri Lanka and with their sovernment, thereby securing the true well being of the island's Tamilla of the securing the securi land's Tamils, we have projected a partiality for one section of Lanka's population.

The Accord, sadly, was another error. It is truly a matter for wonder that though the Government of India was not a

Indo-Sri Lanka relations are fast reaching the point of crisis as the demand for the withdrawal of the Indian armed contingent grows in the island-republic. Here is a wise approach to the problem by a very perceptive commentator. -Editor.

party to the dispute in Sri Lanka, it became a party to an accord for resolving the dispute. India should have been Above the dispute, helping the contending parties as a friendly, non-partisan and influential neighbour. Again, India could have underwritten any accord between disputing parties and offered to help enforce it, if both sides wanted her help. a country meant to be an umpire and an underwriter became a participant, to no one's advantage and at a large cost to itself in terms of money, goodwill and lives lost.

India's clout and diplomacy should have been used in an attempt to bring the Lankan Government and the LTTE to an agreement. If such an agreement was impossible, the Accord that took its place was surely avoidable. Under the Accord, India seemed to guarantee a peace and an order that was beyond her capacity to ensure. Indeed India seemed to guarantee the LTTE's cooperation on the LTTE's behalf but

without the LTTE's consent.

The joint demand of the LTTE, the JVP, the students of Sri Lanka and the Colombo Government that the IPKF should return to India is conclusive proof of the Accord's failure and unwisdom. "We are ready to help as an umpire or as a policeman if the parties to the dispute seriously want our help. But we are helpless if you cannot agree." This and

not the Acoord should have been our stand. The argument that the Accord was worth everything because after all it committed Colombo against offering transmission or shore facilities to the United States holds no water. The United States does not need a transmitter or Lankan soil to broadcast messages to India; and the messages that the JVP and the LTTE are broadcasting to the people of Lanka are not particularly friendly to India. If the aim was to prevent the spirit of enmity to India from obtaining a foothold on Lankan soil, that aim has certainly not been

realised. Notwithstanding the Accord's weaknesses, President Premadasa must be faulted for the manner in which he asked for the IPKF's return. The question could have been raised by him either at a face-to-face meeting with Rajiv Gandhi or via a high-level emissary. But he chose to hurl the demand first via the press. Friends or allies do not talk to each other from the platforms of public meetings.

The Indian Government is entitled to a genuine grievance on this score, but its reaction has to be cool and collected and based on India's interests, long-term and short-term.

Despite its history of shortcomings, the Government of Sri Lanka is the principal force on the island and the party that our government has to deal with. No doubt the island accommodates two other forces, the JVP and the LTTE. However, both these forces seem inimical to India. Neither has the democratic sanction or the democratic obligations of the Government of Sri Lanka; and neither has the influence or sway of that government. And though the JVP and the LTTE may enjoy a temporary coincidence of immediate goals, essentially their interests are mutually hostile. It would be the height of folly for the Government of India to bypass the Government of Colombo for the sake of any direct understanding with either the LTTE or the JVP. In short, the only force on the island with which the Government of India can do business is the Government of Sri Lanka.

By the same token, it would be foolish in the extreme for the Lankan Government to keep India out of the picture in its dealings with groups like the LTTE. Irrespective of the annoyance that New Delhi may at different times have given Colombo, the Government of India is the only force in the

region capable of coming to Colombo's aid

Commonsense dictates six simple conclusions. One, the Government and people of Sri Lanka must accept that for good or ill India is the principal power in the region. Two, (Continued on page 35)

Responsibility before Opposition Chennai and eGangotri

RAJNI KOTHARI

THERE is no phenomenon as peculiar and baffling as that of the Opposition in India. It has been a subject of ridicule, amusement, sarcasm, cynicism and (among those sympathetically inclined) a growing sense of exasperation, together producing a massive credibility gap. What lends an edge of tragedy to the whole thing is that between themselves the Opposition parties have the support of the majority. of the Indian voters (they have always had it), are today in power in such a large number of states, on the whole receive a sympathetic Press, and have never had to look very far for issues to pick up and opportunities to grab to put the government and the ruling party at the Centre in the dock.

The Opposition has so many natural advantages too - a country so full of misery and discontent, with so many unkept promises and unfulfilled expectations, with problems galore and social conflicts and tensions piling upon each other, and with a continuing incidence of breakdowns of the public order, wanton disregard of norms by those in power, and sudden disasters leading to considerable public suffering and outrage. Surely, to an onlooker it would appear like a haven for Opposition activity, organised protests, ideological challenge and a major build-up that could at the same time shake up and demoralise the ruling hierarchy and provide a convincing alternative to it.

Instead, what we have is an Opposition in such disarray, running helter skelter, never pursuing any specific challenge to the government to its logical end, always willing to be side-tracked from real issues by clever announcements and fresh provocations by the government to which the Opposition is forced to react. We have an Opposition that can boast of some very outstanding and highly intelligent leaders but it is not the Opposition that sets the agenda of public discourse and confrontation, it is the ruling party that does that. Even when the government at the Centre indulges in gross violation of democratic norms as it has continuously done (in Andhra, in Punjab, in Jammu and Kashmir, in Tripura, in Nagaland and most recently in Karnataka), the public outcry that results soon gets overtaken by lurid displays of internal squabbles and enmities, intrigues and innuendoes, in which leading spokesmen of the Opposition (from Raj Narain to Swamy, from Charan Singh to Subramaniam Chandrasekhar) have indulged.

As this happens - and it has happened continuously - it is this that occupies public space (as well as public memory) rather than the quite considerable achievements of Opposition-led governments, important movements led by leading Opposition politicians and parties (the railway strike, the JP movement, the successful agitations against so many government measures, from the Bihar Press Bill to the Defamation Bill) and some rather dramatic ex-

posures of corruption in high places and scandals involving almost the entire machinery of government. a la Bofors. In the case of these latter the Press has played a major and catalytic role, helping the Opposition in its encounter with the government. but so much of it has soon got overlaid in the public mind by the depressing state of the Opposition parties and their proclivity to prove themselves (more than Mrs Gandhi or Rajiv Gandhi could) incapable of wielding power and putting it to purposive use.

The amazing thing, of course, is that, in spite of all this, large sections of the people continue to identify with the Opposition (which may different things to different people but they do identify with it) and would like to see it come to power. True, a lot of these may be in the form of 'negative vote' against, for instance, Rajiv Gandhi (who may perhaps be the biggest asset on the side of the Opposition). A lot of it may be a result of identifying with either one or another Opposition party or leader (as for instance in Haryana, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and, until recently, Karnataka). There is as yet no evidence either that there is a single composite entity called 'the Opposition' which offers itself as an identifiable alternative to the people of India, or that the major parties and groups within parties have agreed to pull themselves together and provide one common front (even if this were to be composed of overlapping coalitions that somehow together made sense to the electorate).

Lacking both of these, despite the possibility of large public support, there is no guarantee that it will make it. And it is precisely these conditions that have, of late, bolstered the ego and confidence of the present Prime Minister who, until, only a few weeks ago, appeared to be so utterly distraught that his image even within his own party and vis-a-vis other Congress leaders, had suffered a sharp decline. If Rajiv Gandhi is an asset on the side of the Opposition, the Opposition in its present state is an asset on the side of Rajiv Gandhi. It is the tragedy of the Indian people that they are being tossed around between these two insufferable phenomena. They both lack credibility and together make the political process, as a whole, lacking in credibi-

lity and in any hope for a better future.

THERE is little doubt that, if once again returned to power, the Rajiv Gandhi government not only cannot and will not cope with the accumulated agenda of problems facing India but is also likely to further dismantle the democratic apparatus and pose a grave threat to both freedom and justice. The question is: can it be defeated and a viable alternative to it provided which will not only deal with the agenda facing the country but also restore and strengthen the institutional framework of democracy

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through which that task will be undertaken? Composition gear itself up to take up this historic institutional arena of the polity. And yet nothing challenge, coming to it at a point of time when, if things do not turn for the better, there will be a sharp downslide and erosion, at least from the point of view of the large masses of the people? Also, there may not be another chance for the Opposition parties to provide a democratic alternative in an orderly fashion. What we may have instead is a growing politics of confrontation that will become increasingly violent and provoke rising scales of repression and authoritarian backlash. It is not any longer a question: can the Opposition do it? It is rather a question: how do we make the Opposition do it? As has often happened in history, "we are all in it"!

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This is particularly so in the situation we face in India, at this moment of time. It is a situation created by the eclipse of an institutional order that was in some respects unique to this country but has been almost totally destroyed, in the last two decades. This was provided by a political structure in which while the Congress remained the dominant party providing an all-India framework, it was able to sustain a democratic political process in which both the federal structure of the Congress party and the availability of a wide spectrum of Opposition groups and parties at various levels as well as a free play of intellectual dissent and 'movements' representing new social groups and aspirations, were all given their due role. Twenty five years ago (in 1964) I had characterised this as the Congress system which, I had argued, provided for a unique model that combined both integrative and participant functions permitted on the whole a free play of power and assigned a unique role to the Opposition — not so much of displacing the dominant party from power at the Centre as of providing a continuing source of chalenge, mobilising, new social groups as they emerged, having in its, fold outstanding personalities whom Nehru and others respected, and whenever the Congress strayed too far away from the balance of public opinion and became unpopular, threw it out and look the reins of power. This latter happened at the regional and local levels while the former roles were carried out at all levels including at the Centre.

Starting with the 1967 election and Mrs. Gandhi's overreaction to it through the 1969 split and the populist twist she gave to Indian politics since then, and then through the Emergency, the further splits the ruling party giving rise to the phenomenon of 'Congress-I', the institutional fabric of the Congless system was undermined. The stunning victory of Rajiv Gandhi in 1984 on the crest of a communal wave following his mother's assassination, and since then his systematic undermining of parliahentary institutions, accountability in government and the federal political process, and substitution hereof by a techno-managerial model of governhent, carried the process further. It produced massive and growing dependence on and collaboration with external sources of support, all of which also brought about a regime of high corruption, secret deals and a clear politics of deceit. (See my article in the Indian Express, dated May 16, 1989). The result is that

institutional arena of the polity. And yet nothing has taken its place and the vacuum keeps growing. Hence the more than ordinary significance of the role of the Opposition today and for the coming

Hence the seriousness of the crisis created by an Opposition that, far from being able to fill the vacuum spelt out above, which calls for a creation of an all-India party that is at once cohesive and electric, does not even seem ready to take over from Rajiv Gandhi's Congress and provide a more democratic alternative that is also more accountable, more open and more clean. It is not that at least some of the leaders in the Opposition parties are not aware of this.

Certainly, V. P. Singh and his close associates are struggling to grapple with the situation, despite so many obstacles created by their own colleagues. Some extremely responsible leaders of the two Marxist parties, the BJP and the more popular among the 'regional' parties are also aware of the situation, and in spite of having their own constraints and opposing pulls, are seeking to find a way out of them so that a credible alternative to the present government at the Centre can be placed before the people. The reason why one is so sceptical of the Opposition as it presents itself today is that while some individual leaders may have the capacity to grasp the nature of the challenge they face, they seem to be doing precious little to steer their different parties and alignments towards a course that, even after allowing for possible developments in the near future, inspire hope that things will indeed begin to change for the better in the next few months.

The task that the leadership of the Opposition faces is indeed unenviable; one is asking them to clear the debris created ever since the disaster that overtook the Janata regime in 1979. In a sense, one is being critical precisely because of the seriousness of the situation and the enormity of the task facing the Opposition, against which one sees such a slow pace of effort, so many detours and efforts in reverse gear, so little use being made of the harvest of opportunities provided by Rajiv Gandhi and his coterie, such a decline in the standing of major leaders of the Opposition, caused not a little by people in the Opposition itself, and the continuing spectacle of anaemia, divisiveness, intrigue and a deliberately cultivated culture of gossip and scandal.

THERE is little hope that all this will, be overcome fairly soon, with a clear display of firmness and high quality of leadership. This is all the more necessary because the tasks that face the Opposition leaders (beyond presenting a credible and united front) are rather demanding and cannot be left to chance. There is, first, the serious task of trans-regionalising the Opposition if it is to provide a truly national alternative. The phenomenon of regional parties is understandable in a federal society like this, especially given the extreme centralisation of power

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under the Congress-I, but it makes sense only in a instead of homogenising it and making available for instead of homogenising it and making available for under the Congress-I, but it makes sense only in a instead of homogenising it and making available for under the Congress-I, but it makes sense only in a instead of homogenising it and making available for under the Congress-I, but it makes sense only in a instead of homogenising it and making available for under the Congress-I, but it makes sense only in a instead of homogenising it and making available for under the Congress-I, but it makes sense only in a instead of homogenising it and making available for under the Congress-I, but it makes sense only in a instead of homogenising it and making available for under the Congress-I, but it makes sense only in a instead of homogenising it and making available for under the Congress-I, but it makes sense only in a instead of homogenising it and making available for under the Congress-I, but it makes sense only in a instead of homogenising it and making available for under the Congress-I, but it makes sense only in a instead of homogenising it and making available for under the congress-I, but it makes sense only in a instead of homogenising it and making available for under the congress-I, but it makes sense only in a instead of homogenising it and making available for under the congress-I, but it makes sense only in a instead of homogenising it and making available for under the congress-I, but it makes sense only in a instead of homogenising it and making available for the congress-I, but it makes sense only in a instead of homogenising it and making available for the congress-I, but it makes sense only in a instead of homogenising it and making available for the congress-I, but it makes sense on the congress-I, but it makes sense on the congress-I, but it makes sense on the congress-I, but it makes sense on the congress-I, but it makes sense on the congress-I, but it makes sense of the congress-I, but it make set-up (in which I very much believe) is a national

There is, second, the task of transcending the narrowly conceived ideological divides and the need to find a middle ground on which diverse positions (from left-of-the centre, from regional to caste and communal) can converge in a pragmatic way. Once again, these divisions are natural in a plural society that is differentiated along more than just class lines, as well as on class lines, given the astounding dualism based on massive inequity and exploitation that has taken place. And yet, precisely for countering these phenomena (which have accentuated on an unprecedented scale under the present regime), there is need for a composite strategy for providing a real alternative. It is not easy to do this

but it has to be done. There is, third, the immediate need to resolve the leadership tangle. The emergence of V.P. Singh less than two years ago, almost out of the blue, but offering his credibility, appeared to offer a way out of the long standing leadership crisis in the Opposition. Not much seems to have been done to build on that phenomenon, while efforts to pull down his image and the high standing of some of his close colleagues have proceeded apace, and V.P. Singh himself seems to have given in to the game of musical chairs and made some extremely bad choices, producing in their wake more problems than he has so far been able to handle. But he is still there and has taken some steps that show firmness and courage, and continues to enjoy high popularity among the masses and be broadly acceptable to other party formations despite some mischievous efforts to disturb his standing. But it cannot still be said that a clear picture of who is to lead the Opposition to victory in the next elections has emerged.

Beyond all these tasks remains the pressing need for presenting a credible profile in terms of socioeconomic and political commitments that are, in turn, tied together into an imaginative and inspiring 'call to the nation'. Let me end this article with suggesting the key to such a unifying call that can bring together a set of basic commitments which can together provide the country with a real alternative to the present regime - and the system through which it seeks to perpetuate itself in power.

Central to such a call is the need to put an end to the increasingly alien nature of governance and its growing collaboration with external sources of capital, technology and trade-offs, many of which have led to a growing tie-up between India's ruling elite (itself without roots in this country) and foreign governments and multinationals. This has, in turn, produced a regime of corruption, cut-backs and secret deals that have then spread like cancer as has been revealed by recent exposures of a series of scandals. All this needs to be put an end to, and we need to resume the task of nation-building based on indigenous efforts and capacities and skills of our own people, resuming also the path of self-reliance. decolonisation and cultural renaissance that respects both the integrity and the diversity of Indian culture.

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State its central role in the development process, to recover the public realm and to arrest the tendency towards privatising public institutions and handing things over to the corporate sector and to monied interests, the tendency also to discredit the regular bureaucracy and its norms of public accountability and probity and to replace it by a techno-managerial structure of a corporate kind that is taken out of parliamentary scrutiny and public controls as, for instance, by the Public Accounts Committee and the office of the CAG.

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Third, there is need to rebuild the institutions of democratic functioning that have been badly eroded - the constitutional apparatus for enforcing the rule of law, the institutions of economic planning and development, the institutions of learning and education, a truly free and unfettered Press and independent mass media, above all the political framework consisting of the party system, the federal structure and local self-governing bodies many of which have been allowed to go into limbo. The thunder and aplomb of the Prime Minister on panchayati raj, after having undermined local and federal institutions, is no more than a propaganda gimmick that verges on being a fraud on the people.

And, fourth, following the same logic, there is need to return to the unfinished (indeed deliberately forsaken) path of institutionally providing for economic equity and social justice, access to ecological resources of which the poor have been denuded by corporate interests in collaboration with agents of the state, and protection and preservation of India's cultural integrity which too, is currently being threatened by a global technological juggernaut that is affecting the autonomy of both the Indian State and the diverse cultures that make for its fundamentally plural and decentralised character.

As these constitute different facets of resuming India's nation-building towards a truly autonomous, self-reliant and indigenous course by both regaining lost ground during the last two decades of Congress rule and adding new dimensions to it which arise from our discovery of serious flaws and failures of the development model we have adopted which have led to deep social and economic divisions and made the polity itself vulnerable to external influences and pressures. To put it in one comprehensive term, the task is to pick up once again the threads of swaraj through commitment to truly swadeshi model of both governance and development in which the people become the guardians of their destiny in place of the present highly centralised and elitist structure that is itself alien in character and is in collusion with foreign agencies out to acquire a foothold in India.

Now, this is not a path and direction that the Congress-1 can ever take us to. Can the Opposition do it? One is not at all sure. And yet, there seems to be no escape from creating a credible alternative to the Congress-I that can undertake the kind of agenda that is laid out here. The alternative to creating such

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Iran and her Neighbours

FRED HALLIDAY

This is obviously a very important moment for all of us who have studied Iran. It is not just the tenth anniversary of the revolution but a period of uncertainty following the ceasefire continues.

The question that I have been asked to answer is: is Iran a threat to its neighbours? We are dealing with uncertainties, with regard to domestic politics. It is not just the question of it not being clear what the official line is now, but if you start making specific predictions you may very well be disproved.

One has to address a question like this in terms of three contexts. One has to look at what the leadership of the Islamic republic has done since coming to power and, particularly, what it is doing now. How has its foreign policy evolved? Secondly, one has to look at this in the context of Iranian history. Revolutions claim to alter countries completely and those who don't like revolutions say they don't really alter anything at all. We are going to hear a lot of the latter with regard to France, I suspect, in the next few months. The answer is, of course, that they change not as much as the revolutionaries claim, but probably a lot more than those who don't like the revolutions would have us believe. In the case of Iran, there are clearly major areas of continuity and there are also areas of discontinuity: one has to try and get that balance right and look at what are the problems that Iran has inherited from its past. If you have a revolution you can change many things, but you can't change your neighbours and you can't change the feelings which may exist within your country and outside towards your country and its neighbours. The third sort of context one has to look at in Iran is to look at other revolutions.

The Iranian revolution like all revolutions s one hundred percent unique. It is unique n some ways and it is also unique in some ways that it doesn't draw attention to, in other words, in ways which have nothing to do with Islam: these include the fact that it is a revolution that took place in cities, a revolution which took place, by comparison with others, with less violence — James Bill has computed the figures in his recent book: we are talking about tens of thousands which is a terrible ragedy, but nothing like other revolutions in the actual period up to the seizure of power. Iran's is also a revolution which took place in a country probably more modern than any other country which has yet seen a revolution. So it is in some ways Unique: but there are also ways in which it is not unique and this applies to foreign policy as well. The straightforward answer to the question, 'is Iran a threat to it's neighbours?' is: 'yes, but.' I want to

With the passing away of Ayatollah Khomeini, the world attention is once again focussed on Iran. This article by the distinguished commentator on West Asian affairs was written sometime ago. However, it provides a valuable insight into Iran's relations with her neighbours and would therefore be useful for readers of Mainstream.

-Editor

begin with the 'but' and then go on to the 'yes'.

But number one is if we look at Iranian history. It is not Iran which in this century has threatened its neighbours, it is its neighbours which have threatened Iran. Iran has five neighbours: Turkey, Russia Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq. The only one which has not sent troops into Iran at some point in this century is Afghanistan - it did so in the eighteenth century and might still have a try somewhat further down the line. The Russians have invaded three times, the British invaded in 1941 from Pakistan and Iraq, the Turks sent troops into the north of Iran during the First World War, and they might well try a bit of hot pursuit against Kurds later on if they were so minded. The Iraqis, of course, invaded in 1980. So, from an Iranian point of view, the fact is that it is Iran which has been threatened and this has left a very deep mark. I think, on the perception of Iranians of the outside world: it is they who have been invaded and they

who feel they have been manipulated.

Now we know, and it is a very important part of Iranian politics, and Shaul Bakhash and James Bill many others have written about it, that myths about international relations play a very important role in Iran. With all respect to the myths and fantasms of other countries, I would say the Iranians are out in front as far as this particular propensity is concerned. But there is, as with the paranoia of any individual, often very good reason for it: "I would be paranoid except I do have enemies." To a degree, this goes for the Iranians as well. It is a disabling paranoia in the sense that, under the Shah and under Khomeni, it doesn't give Iran the ability to have an accurate and therefore a practical view of what the foreign issues are; but it is a very important feature of almost every conversation and every newspaper article, virtually, and every book and speech from Iran that you ever read, and there is a reason for it, namely the fact that, as I say, it is Iran which has been invaded by its neighbours and not the other way round.

Secondly, if we talk about threatening neighbours and expansion, and it was not of course the Imam that began this, it was the Shah. It was the Shah who, in the late 1960s, decided to make Iran the dominant power in the area; it was he who insisted on causing, considerable friction with the Arabs. which is why no Gulf security organisation was set up in the 1970s. It was the Shah who, in particular, laid down two time bombs which have erupted with considerable consequence since his departure. One was the 1975 agreement with Iraq. Now we will no doubt hear more of this; I may have

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ly fair and sensible agreement but it was reached in an unfair way. The consequence was that as soon as the Shah went and the Iraqis thought that Iran was weak, they renounced it. In particular they renounced the, in itself, good agreement on the Shatt al-Arab river.

If we are looking at the causes of the Iran-Iraq war, one of the causes - there are others - was the nature of the 1975 agreement which the Shah produced by waging for six years an undeclared, low-intensity war against Iraq. The other bomb was, of course, Afghanistan: there were many causes of the communist seizure of power in 1978, but one of them undoubtedly was the Shah's attempt to entice the Kabul regime of Daoud away from the Soviet Union and thereby provoke the political crisis in which the communists came to power. So if we are talking about Iranian threats and expansion, a subject which the Arab world is particularly keen on emphasising, then the fact is that this of course has a longer history than that of Khomeini's regime.

The third 'but' is very much an extension to the international plain of Shaul Bakhash's domestic point: it is that this regime is concerned with ideology, it shouts very loud indeed - most revolutionarier do - but it is also quite pragmatic. We saw not just a pragmatic, but a self-defeatingly pragmatic settlement of the hostage crisis. The Iranians left it far too long to get an agreement with the Americans and ended up being the only revolution in history to repay all its debts on the nail; and we have seen it with the war with Iraq as well - a pragmatic end with all the problems that we know. Therefore, the ability of Iran to recognise where, if not its national interest lies, then at least where the interests of the survival of the state lie, should not be underestimated.

Those are the 'buts'. Let me now come on to the question of how Iran does threaten its neighbours; and I would just like to put this in the broader context of how revolutions in general threaten their neighbours, because I think in foreign policy what the Iranian revolution has done very much fits an earlier pattern. All revolutions have what E.H. Carr, in talking about the Bolshevik revolution, called a 'dual' policy. One component is to have diplomatic relations, trading relations with other states, to give cocktail parties, or the equivalent in the case of Iran, for foreign guests and diplomats and so forth. The other half of the dual policy is to organise against other governments, to organise opposition groups to promote change and revolution in other states. It is not a question of saving that the revolution has either formally accepted diplomatic relations or is bent on overthrowing the world. The point is that you try to do both: one can see that this went on for decades and decades in the case of the Soviet Union, in China, in Cuba and I would expect it to go on for decades and decades in the case of Iran — we are not at any decisive turning point. The question is not: have they abandoned the export of revolution? The question is: how are they modulating the export of revolution in the light of these other more pragmatic concerns?

changed my views on many things but my view of We can turn now to the question of the Islamic this at the time is what it is now. This was a perfect foundation the duality is clear. The long to the the spectrum who argue that what Islamic leaders and politicians do in the latter half of the twentieth century bears very little relationship to what the holy texts of Islam say. This is not because they do, or do not, believe these holy texts, nor because they don't derive authority from them, but because they can derive virtually anything they want from them; we remember Al-Afghani's famous remark that Islam is a sea in which you can catch virtually any fish you want to. This goes for domestic politics: you can justify feudalism, capitalism, socialism, whatever you want, and the same goes for foreign policy. So, in Khomeini's interpretation of Islam and his novel interpretation of Islam in particular. there are themes which justify both parts of the dual policy. There is one which says: we are against interference in other countries; we regard this as pernicious - after all it has happened to us; we do not-believe in coercing other people by force of arms to accept our views; Mohammed himself, Prophet, sent out ambassadors to the world; we should do the same thing - and so forth. In the recent text on the power of the state we see a very interesting development of these pragmatic, raison

d'etat, arguments.

On the other hand, there are universalist themes, although again, shorn of their Islamic character, they are ones we have heard before, in 1789, 1917 and on many other occasions. Islam knows no frontiers. Islam does not believe in nations. Unless we convert the whole world to Islam we will never be secure in our own Islamic revolution. The peoples of the world, the mostazafin, the oppressed, are calling on us to help them and it is our duty to provide what assistance we can. These themes are also there, and of course there are specific Islamic variants of this. One is the use of Islamic clergy, the training of clergy in Iran to be sent out across the world whether on long, full courses or short courses. Another is the use of the Hadj. The evidence suggests that it was not the Iranians who were mainly responsible for the bloody events at Mecca a year and a half ago, but there is no doubt that they see the Hadj as a political mission to tell the Muslims of the world about imperialism, Zionism, oppression, and the achievements of the Islamic republic. Khomeini and Kho' iniha who organises it, have said many times that they see the Hadj in this way. So in that sense, within Khomeini's Islam these two themes are present and you can go backwards and forwards as you wish to justify whatever policy you want.

me now address the question of how revolutions threaten other states and apply this the case of Iran. First of all there is the systematic organisation of rebel groups in other countries, or the encouragement of them with arms, training, radios and so forth. The Iranian revolution has certainly done this to an extent. It has done so in the ways that all revolutions have by getting young people to come to Iran

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by training them, by sending arms and literature unditte blamic wordshowhatever disillusion and nationa-abroad; we have seen many cases of this — in Iraq, list antipathy to Iran may later have developed spectacularly; to some extent in Afghanistan; there was an attempt - I don't think it would have lasted, but it might have got a bit further than it did - to stage an insurrection in Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and many other countries. If one were to ask the question now, in which countries is Iran today promoting change in this, as it were, hard core revolutionary sense then one would be left probably with three countries: Afghanistan (which we will come back to later), Iraq where they would certainly like to change the government and still have their forces in Iran, al-Majlisal-Ala, the Supreme Council; and of course Lebanon where through the Syrian-Shiite connection they have a considerably organised following which is now fighting other Shiites. This is not the main form that Iran's encouragement of change in other countries takes.

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The second means which revolutions have resorted to is simply to invade other countries, to impose revolution from outside by using their own armed forces. Here, of course, we come to the question of the Iran-Iraq war. All revolutions claim they have been invaded, while their neighbours always say the revolutionaries started it first. Here we have an Iraqi chicken and an Iranian egg, or an Iranian egg and an Iraqi chicken. Yet there is no doubt that it was the Iraqi army which invaded Iran on September 21 or 22, 1980 — that is not in dispute. But, if you just read the transcripts of Iranian speeches over the previous eighteen months, you can't but see that if you had been sitting in Baghdad you might have had good reason to think that the Iranians were going to try and invade you or overthrow you. There was a degree, perhaps exaggerated, but a degree of guerrilla warfare organised by Iran in Iraq prior to the war; I remember being in Baghdad on the day that the attempt to assassinate Deputy Premier Tariq Aziz took place, and I feel that the Iraqi concern had a certain degree of legitimation in it. It doesn't justify invading Iran, but there was nonetheless a two-way process at work there. Iran has not, however, been able to prevail against Iraq, in fact they have united the Iraqis behind Saddam Hussein - no mean achievement I would think — and it would not seem that their army will be able to do much elsewhere in the Gulf nor would they probably wish to do so.

The third and most important way in which revolutions tend to encourage change in other countries 18 by the force of the example. The French revolution had an enormous effect all over the world before there were radios, telexes, faxes, jet planes, International conferences or anything else — because people heard that in some country the population had risen up and executed the king and redistributed the land and called for equality of all the citizens. In the case of Iran, I think, this exemplary factory is also very important. The example of the revolution itself, of, in other words, how it happened, happened through millions of people coming into the streets shouting 'Allahu Akbar', going on Strike strike and refusing to be moved. This example alone has had an enormous and long run effect in

Secondly, post-revolutionary Iran is an example in certain specific respects. It is one of the very few Third World countries in the world which can claim to be genuinely independent, at enormous cost to itself, but it is. There is also the model of austerity and a rejection of western materialism and corruption; it does not mean the regime and its officials are not now corrupt in a small sense, but that there is a model of austerity which appeals to many people - my favourite example is when Khomeini had his heart attack in 1981 or 1982; he went to hospital and when he came out he did his I'm a poor Mullah speech (rather than a bashing everyone over the head speech) and said words to the effect of: 'Thank you very much for all your good wishes.' They asked him how was it in hospital and he replied that 'this was the first time in my life that I have slept in a bed'. It is probably the case that it was the first time in his life that he had ever slept in a bed, and there are very few leaders in the world who can make that kind of statement. that appeal to a certain austerity.

It is this line that, again, in Khomeini's words, 'we didn't make this revolution for cheap watermelons' which has an impact. Therefore, the longer run impact of the Iranian revolution is not so much where the organised hand of the Revolutionary Guards is to be seen or that of the Iranian state or of the Office of the Export of Revolution is to be seen, but where people knowing what is happening in Iran or thinking they know what is happening in Iran, seek to imitate it. So, in Turkey those who are most sympathetic to the Iranian revolution are Sunni not Shitte Muslims. In Egypt people have been inspired by the Iranian revolution; officials say it is an Iranian conspiracy, and the same was true in Tunisia. This is not the point. Of course it is a testimony to the impact of the Iranian revolution and an irony, the consequences of which we don't yet know the end of, that probably of all the countries in the area which, as it were, have reproduced the Iranian experience, it should be the one which is now in turmoil, namely Algeria. It is, like Iran, a country with a large population, it is oil-producing, it exhibits many of the same urban tensions as Iran has faced. This has got nothing to do with Iranian state activity, but with similar conditions. In sum, Iran is a threat to the regimes of its neighbours and of other countries in the region because of the example, however bloodied and sullied it may be, which it poses, as much as because of an active Iranian involvement.

A further respect in which revolutions threaten their neighbours is factionalism. Factions within the country seek to find issues on which to discredit their opponents to challenge them, and use international issues. It is not that they necessarily believe in exporting revolution or not talking to the Americans: but if your opponent is found talking to the Americans or doing a deal with some Arab king, then you are going to use that issue in order to discredit him. In the aftermath of the war and

(Continued on page 33)

National Values and Foreign Podic Chennal and eGangotri

SATISH KUMAR

INDIA's official reaction to the brutal suppression of a nonviolent pro-democracy mass agitation in China has been callously mild, to say the least. Except a . statement by the official spokesman that India was "saddened" by the developments in China, nothing has been said, nor any action taken to suggest that India was disturbed, and did not approve of what might turn out to be a misconduct of historic proportions on the part of the Chinese authorities. This is enormously at variance with the reaction of the Indian public, both political and intellectual.

A wide spectrum of political opinion (the CPI-M being a major exception), and nearly the whole range of intellectual opinion has strongly condemned the action of the Chinese authorities. This is in keeping with the values for which India stands, democracy being the foremost amongst them. This is also in keeping with India's tradition of strongly condemning the suppression of democratic urges anywhere, specially in the neighbourhood. Jawaharlal Nehru did so when General Ayub Khan staged a coup in Pakistan in 1958, and again when King Mahendra dismissed the elected government of B.P. Koirala in Nepal in 1960. The only inglorious exception to this tradition was the failure of Morarji Desai as the Prime Minister to condemn the execution of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto by Zia-ul-Haq in Pakistan in 1979.

The question must be raised as to why has the Government of India chosen to react at such low key to the momentous developments in China. A possible answer is that India would not like to queer the pitch for normalisation of relations with

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China, for which a high profile process was unleashed with the Prime Minister's visit to China last December. A few considerations, however, must be kept in mind with regard to the normalisation process. Firstly, normalisation is a mutual need. China hopes to benefit as much from normalisation of Sino-Indian relations as India. It was dictated by China's own needs of economic modernisation. Secondly, the Chinese regime headed by Deng Xiaoping made no concession to India during the summit meeting last December. If at all, it was India which felt constrained to reiterate that it regarded Tibet as a part of China, and that too without a quid pro quo. Thirdly, any future regime in China, whether led by Deng Xiaoping or the moderates who might eventually occupy the political scene, will not be able to resist normalisation of relations with India if it is dictated by the interests of China as a state, irrespective of the opinion expressed by India on the pro-democracy movement now. In fact, the future seems to belong to the moderates rather than the hardliners, who suffer not only from the disadvantage of age but also from their inability to adjust to the political realities of our times.

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Among the powers which have reasons to be concerned about the brutal behaviour of authorities in China, India is the only one to have reacted so insensitively. The United States went to the extent of imposing economic sanctions and restricting military interaction with China. Even the Soviet Union, after initial silence, condemned the Chinese action unambiguously. France offered refuge to the dissidents and gave them hope that France could be used as a launching pad of future activity. dissident announced that it was recalling its ambassador to China to protest against the Chinese suppres-

In this perspective, India owed it to its own traditions and values to have taken a more categorical view of the developments in China and denounced the massacre of unarmed civilians strongly so that it is not found on the wrong side of history when the time for reckoning comes.

THE BOOK REVIEW March/April 1989 issue

Reviews by S. Gopal, Bhisham Sahni, P.C. Chatterjee, Arif A. Waqif, Lakshmi Kannan and others. Also excerpts from Prem Bhatia's Of Many Pastures.

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Stalemate in Nepartelly dia am Relations and An Nepalese View

YASHODA SUWAL

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THE present stalemate between Nepal and India may be regarded as a negative aspect of the developments in the relations between the two countries. However this crisis is enough to realise that India may pose the gravest challenge to the Nepalese economy. The challenge is not only serious but also multi-layered, because it involved many issues pertaining to Nepal-India relations.

The crux of the problem, as it appears to be, is that India is trying to link the economic problem with her security interests whereas 'Nepal is of the opinion that the security of one nation cannot be linked to the security of another state. Secondly, India wants to have a single unified treaty of trade and transit, whereas Nepal believes that trade is a matter of bilateral relations and transit is the inherent right of a landlocked state. Thirdly, India has proposed to make an intensive review of the bilateral relations existing between the two countries including the Treaty of Peace and Friendship of 1950, and Nepal has accepted India's proposal; and yet the two governments have not been able to sit together to solve the problem in an amicable manner. So the questions may arise: how did the crisis evolve? And what went wrong on the part of both the governments? A study of different dimensions of Nepal-India relations may help one to get the answers to these questions.

Security Dimension

In fact India's primary interest in its neighbourhood policy lies in ensurance of her national security rather than maintaining good neighbourly relations. Nehru's speeches delivered on several occasions do testify to India's security interests in South Asia and beyond. India has always considered the frontiers of the Himalayan Kingdom as its defence parameters. To quote Nehru:

"If it is breached, the way to the Indian plains and oceans beyond would lie exposed, and the threat to the other countries of South and South East Asia... India's determination to resist aggression and to retain her territorial integrity is, therefore, throughout this whole reglon."1

Unfortunately, Nehru's concept of the Himalayas forming the natural barrier between India and China has been seriously challenged in 1962. This historical antecedent has led India to believe that Indian presence in Nepal cannot threaten the contract of t threaten the Chinese security whereas Chinese presence can threaten India's security. For Nepal, the Chinese influence is a counterweight to the

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Indian influence; however, Nepal expects India to appreciate her friendship with China. Nepal cannot ignore one at the cost of another. She has her own security interests, and does not want to be influenced by India's security perceptions. Towards the end of the 1960s Nepal had departed from the Indian security system through her demands for the withdrawal of the Indian Military Mission in Kathmandu and Indian Military personnel stationed on Nepal's northern border to which India finally acceded.

In the 1970s with the bifurcation of Pakistan, India emerged as a dominant power in South Asia, and the regional balance of power which was disturbed by the Sino-Indian conflict in 1962, was once again maintained and preserved. Consequently, Sikkim was annexed as the twentysecond State of the Indian Union. In the midst of these developments Nepal put forward a proposal that she be declared as a zone of peace with a view to put an end to the foreign power pressures once and for all. Nepal's distancing act is unacceptable to India. India has always thought of Nepal as an asset to China in time of need. A friendly Nepal is, therefore, India's strategic necessity. Hence instead of supporting Nepal's proposal for "zone of peace", India has proposed that the entire South Asian region be declared as a zone of peace. She has a threat perception in her confrontational relations with China. She wanted to evolve a common pattern of regional security in which all other Sonth Asian States are expected to support and assist Indian notion of regional security, while there exist inherent contradictions in the security perceptions of all South Asian countries.

In the 1980s some unfortunate developments like social unrest, communal violence, acts of terrorism emanating from seperatist movements have posed serious challenges to'the internal security of South Asian countries. In the context of these developments in the region Nepal seems to have given due attention to the domestic dimension of national security rather than the external dimension. In connection with this government officials from the Nepalese side have stated very emphatically that imports of 500 trucks of anti-aircraft guns from China are meant to modernise the Nepalese armed forces, in the words of the Nepalese Ambassador in New Delhi, these arms "are rather for their morale boost up".2 A militarily weak Nepal could hardly afford to make use of these arms for an offensive purpose.

Since this is Nepal's first arms deal with China, India has become apprehensive about Nepal's behaviour., Indian intellectuals try to project that "Nepal is playing China card against India." Their views are more imaginary than real, because the big Asian powers like India and China have always taken decisions and actions based on the perception of their own interests. Rather than take interests of a small state like Nepal into consideration, they have small state like Nepal into consideration, they have Nepal without any premium.³ tried to influence others. However and the relations As far as the treaty of transit is concerned, the and China are close neighbours, the relations between these countries should be closer. Consequently, the more the chances of misgivings, and distrust cropping up, the more should these countries develop mutual understanding, sympathy, fellow feelings and appreciation.

Socio-Economic Dimensions

Nepal being surrounded on three sides - east, west and south - by Indian territory, is practically open to India for all purposes. In the north the Himalayas have made overland communication between Nepal and China difficult. Between Nepal and India, there exists a 500 mile long open border, free transit, and unhampered movements of people on both sides of the border. This border has remained opened since

The existing open border between Nepal and India provided the infiltrators an easy access to the neighbouring countries which, in turn, adversely affected relations between the two countries. What has been wanting up to now is consistent well-defined policies on the part of both the Governments to tackle the situation and control the infiltrators from the neighbouring countries. For example, the explosive situation in India's north-eastern region demands that both Nepal and India should take necessary measures towards this direction. Recently, the Government of Nepal has introduced a "work permit" system for the foreign nationals including Indians working in industrial establishments and three towns of Kathmandu valley. The Indian Government reacted adversely and stated that Nepal has adopted a "discriminatory policy" against the Indian nationals.
What Nepal has done is to fulfill her minimum safety and security requirements. This does not take away the right of any Indian citizen to work in Nepal.

Indeed trade and transit remain one of the irritants in Nepal-India relations. These treaties have expired on March 23, 1989 despite Nepal's desperate attempt to persuade the Government of India to continue arrangements of trade and transit until another treaty was signed. With the expiry of these treaties the Government of India has gone to the extent of stopping supplies of petroleum products and essential goods to Nepal. India's imposition of an "economic blockade" has badly hit the life of the Nepalese people and this has also caused hardships in trade, industry and tourism.

As regards custom duties and other tariffs imposed by Nepal on all imported goods, the Indian media reported that Nepal has begun to discriminate against Indian products. In actual practice all imports from India are subject to less than 50 per cent of basic custom duties, and the only imports from India on which Nepal has levied additional custom duties are television sets, refrigerators and passenger cars. Even these Indian goods are exempt from insurances and freight charges, whereas such facility is not given to the imports from any third country. The imports from a third country incur premium between 25 per

cent to 60 per cent while imports from India reach

question arises is:, will Nepal give up her transit right for which she has been fighting for more than two decades? Undoubtedly, transit is the right of any landlocked state whereas the freedom of transit is a matter of convenience to a coastal state. If India feels that the traffic in transit has encouraged "unauthorised trade" between the two countries and wants to improve the conditions of conduct of trade. this sort of practical problem should be solved only through effective management, not by a single treaty of trade and transit, not even by imposition of an "economic blockade" resulting in the closure of 13 transit points which had already been acceded to by India during the Janata regime.

Political and Legal Dimensions

The present stalemate between Nepal and India is also focussed on the Treaty of Peace and Friendship of 1950, because the Treaty is considered to be the basis of relations between the two countries. The Indian media has often argued that Nepal is not adhering to the spirit and the letter as well as the contents of the Treaty of 1950.

Legally speaking, when the Treaty is made applicable to both the contracting parties, it cannot be a binding force for only one party. India has followed her own independent policy. She has never consulted Nepal and always ignored the latter in the matters of external affairs. Similarly, Nepal has never sought India's advice while taking decisions in such matters. So there can be no argument about the non-existence of the Treaty. Neither India nor Nepal seem to have followed the provisions of the Treaty, nor have these two countries taken any step to invalidate the Treaty, nor have they discussed to bring about changes in the spirit and the letter as well as the clauses of the Treaty. What exists today is only the symbolic significance of the Treaty.

Regarding the laws relating to the transit rights of landlocked states, there is no legal binding force through which Nepal could bargain with the transit state. India is not a signatory of the Law of the Sea Convention and Nepal is not a member of GATT, through which the latter could get some preferential treatment in the trade regime. However, it would be unwise on the part of both the governments to allow the political understanding between the two countries to deteriorate in the absence of any legal arrangements. So the development of harmonious bilateral relationship between Nepal and India is a basic necessity in the solution of these problems of trade and transit.

To sum up, with the emergence of India as a dominant power in the region, the South Asian scene underwent a change. It is deliberately reported by the Indian media that New Delhi wanted to teach Kathmandu a lesson for its distancing act. Now and then India followed a policy of resorting to pressuretactics. So it is apparent that India is in a position to apply the political leverage by exploiting Nepal's dependency on it for transit facilities. Rajiv Gandhi,

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the Prime Minister of India, Quiting by Hisa Staffel Toundaling Shannal and egangotri Government formally informed Calcutta stated:

"In matters of trade and transit we will act according to international law and norms. We prefer one treaty. There are certain other things, if these problems are solved, this treaty of trade and transit will be settled."4

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From the statement of the Prime Minister it is clear that the crux of the problem is not the economic one: Later he made a statement in Simla that "we took a strong position", because "two or three recent happenings upset us", that is, the intro-duction of "work permits" for Indian nationals in Nepal and the imposition of certain taxes on Indian, goods.5 -

Thus, India has personal grudges against Nepal. For that reason she wanted the two separate treaties to be replaced by a single treaty. She proposed to have trade with Nepal on the basis of the most favoured nation' treatment so that Nepal would get no concessions from India. Consequently, P.V. Narasimha Rao, the Indian Minister for External Affairs announced in Parliament that the treaty of trade and transit "cannot be isolated from the Treaty of Peace and Friendship of 1950", because "India was willing to go into the working of the 1950 Treaty of Peace and Friendship with Nepal to ensure its implementation in letter and spirit, to review the functioning of the Treaty, not the Treaty itself."6

India's intention to maintain a correlation between the treaty of trade and transit and the Treaty of Peace and Friendship 1950 indicates that if Nepal wanted preferential treatment in trade and transit, she should maintain "special relations" with India. India is of the opinion that her relationship with Nepal cannot be equated with Nepal's friendship with China. For Nepal, friendship with India cannot be a substitute to her friendship with China. Just as Nepal's friendship with China can never be a substitute to her friendship with India. However, the expiry of treaty provided India with an opportune moment to put pressure on Nepal. India has challenged that she is prepared to make "an intensive review" of the entire gamut of Indo-Nepalese relations. For this purpose on May 3, 1989 the Indian Ambassador in Nepal was called back to New Delhi. Further, the Government of India announced that "the existing system of stand-by loan will not be renewed because of the changes in trade arrangements." Thus India has put too much pressure on Nepal. Now the question is: will Nepal be able to withstand these pressures?

Need for Liberal Approach

Nepal has well understood that these pressures would not only wreck her economy but also threaten her survival. However, the Government of Nepal never sought to inflame the public opinion against India. Such a step would have endangered the Security of Nepal Recently Nepal has entered into agreements with China, Bangladesh and Singa-Pore for the supply of petrol, diesel and other essential commodities to tide over the situation. On April 20,

the Government of India its willingness to sit across the table for friendly discussions on the entire gamut of Nepal-India relations including the specific issues of trade and transit. India's dilemma is that on one hand, she cannot afford to allow a third country to take advantage of Nepal's strategic position; and on the other hand, she is not prepared to give up the so-called special relationship with Nepal. The present crisis between the two countries is related to India's sensitivity to Nepal's action and Nepal's vulnerability due to its dependence on India. Nepal's bargaining power over India is intimately connected with the latter's sensitivity to the former's action. Nepal's vulnerability depends on to what extent she can take effective measures to minimise the cost of her sensitivity to India's policy.

However, crisis may be said to be the outcome of the love-hate relationship between the two sisters of South Asia. In such relationship India has turned out to be an extremist. Her love is so possessive, Nepal could not even breathe properly within her sister's warm embrace. And her hate is so frightening that it tends to destabilise Nepal. In such a desperate condition Nepal can neither love nor hate India. Nepal will feel more secure and comfortable if India adopts a liberal approach in her behaviour towards that

country.

FOOTNOTES

- J. Bandyopadhya, The Making of India's Foreign Policy. Allied Publishers, New Delhi, p. 29.
- 2. H.E. Mrs B. Shaha speaks in a Panel discussion on "Indo-Nepalese Relations at the Cross Road," organised by India Society May 5, 1989.
- 3. This section heavily draws from Nepal News, Vol. XVIII April 1, 1989 No. 4 (A News Bulletin published by the Royal Nepalese Embassy, Barakhamba Road, New Delhi).
- 4. The Statesman, April 19, 1989 (as cited in D.P. Kumar's Article on "India-Nepal Crisis").
 - 5. The Times of India, April 17, 1989.
 - 6. The Times of India, April 14, 1989.

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Tragedy of a Young Housewife

SATYAPAL DANG

THE writer of this article is neither a journalist nor an activist in the fight for equal rights between men and women even though I have always supported this cause as every Communist - nay, every progressive must do. Being a field worker more than anything else, I have never attempted to write on any aspect of the women's question in India today even though I do have strong views. But I cannot help writing about a tragedy which has affected me personally and which, in my opinion, has an important lesson for young women as well as their

Some years after I bade goodbye to the student movement and started learning the A-B-C of trade union work in Chheharta, Amritsar, a girl student started coming to me for guidance in the matter of writing some essay or the other. A sweet girl, she was known to be a sister of a very popular doctor of Chheharta. The doctor's family like this writer's family had to migrate from that part of Punjab which became a part of Pakistan on August 15, 1947. In his student days, he too was in the All-India Students' Federation (AISF). We had become close friends remain so. For years together we were colleagues in the Municipal Committee. He was also my wife's colleague in the Municipal Committee for almost an equally long period.

Vinod was not his sister but, his niece. His only sister (Vinod's mother), her husband and their . only son got killed during the riots leaving behind Vinod, a very small child. She was adopted by some Muslim family of Pakistan. They began bringing her up as their own daughter. It was after quite sometime that my doctor friend's father was able to discover her and bring her to Chheharta where the family had settled. When she came, Vinod used to speak Urdu. She

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came as a part of the well-known programme under the leadership of late Mridula Sarabhai to bring back to the respective countries left behind women and children from both sides.

Vinod regarded her maternal grandfather as her father, her maternal grandmother as her mother and her maternal uncles as her brothers. And the less "brothers" loved her no than their own real sister perhaps more. The truth was told to Vinod when it could not be helped because in the school, the name of her real father had been recorded. She of course wept a lot. The tears she shed were of sorrow as well as of gratitude. Some close family friends too were told the truth. Both my wife and myself loved Vinod all the more.

After her education, she was married into an equally welleducated family. Her father-inlaw was a law graduate who often argued before Industrial Tribunals on behalf of employers in cases in which this writer represented the workers. In many respects he held progressive views, and outside the field of labour movement, we had good relations. He gave good education to his sons who were able to get "well-settled" in life. I often would remember Vinod though it was very rarely that I met her

after she got married.

We were thus stunned when about 6.30 AM on June 4, 1989 my doctor friend rang up our office and told me that Vinod had committed the preceding night. Another doctor relative of hers (from her parents' side) living near her in-laws place had been informed and he had immediately rushed to her in-laws' house. She had told him not to try to save her life as she had suffered enough. She was shifted to the hospital immediately but died within two hours despite the best efforts of the doctors. She had taken some pesticide which is known to be a very effective and sure killer.

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Vinod was the darling not only of my doctor friend and his brothers but of the entire family including their wives and their children. The house was plunged in great grief. I wanted to know why Vinod had committed suicide. I knew it for certain that it was not any "dowry" problem. I was certain of that for more than one reason. One was that Vinod had been married for about 20 years now and was 40 years old. I was shocked when I was told the reason. Vinod had given birth to three daughters but had not delivered any male child. And for this "crime" of hers she had to suffer much taunting and mental torture. Such an attitude prevailing in the family of her in-laws was a shock enough. What shocked me also was the fact that Vinod was not/persuaded to come over to the home in which she was brought up before she got married - for good, if necessary.

The family knew her suffering. She was also told more than once to come over. "What will happen to my children," used to be her answer. I felt that the family did not press her to the extent it should have. The only thing that can explain this is the common that after marriage, daughters should live in their new homes, howsoever unhappy they might be. The family had, on more than one occasion, shared many of its secrets with me or my wife who happens to be the General Secretary of Punjab Istri Sabha. But somehow, this secret was not told to either of us. We felt deeply pained because of the feeling that perhaps we could have been of help in making Vinod take a bold stand and also help her feel sure that it would not endanger the future of her daughters either. Her living "parents" are of course full of remorse besides grief.

(Continued on page 24)

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Bodo Agitation: Background Prospects

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THE thirteen-day bandh called by the All-Bodo Students' Union (ABSU) for a separate Bodoland ended on May 28, leaving a trail of violence that claimed 22 lives. Stray incidents of violence are, however, still continuing and these are not confined to the tribal-dominated areas alone.

The ruling AGP seems to have at last woken up to the danger that the Bodo movement poses to its government. The warning signal came in Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's cryptic comment at Darjeeling, on May 18 that if the Assam Government failed to solve the Bodo problem, "the Centre will have only one option left to it", without spelling out what the option is. Rajiv Gandhi's remark only confirmed the suspicion that the Centre intends to use the Bodo movement to dismiss the AGP Government and impose President's Rule in Assam.

So long, the ABSU had been insisting on the presence of Central observers in any future talks with the Assam Government, while the latter had taken the stand that this was not necessary "at this stage" and that the question of associating the Union Government in the talks might arise only at a later stage. Now, however, Assam Government has agreed to talk to the ABSU in presence of Central observers with State Home Minister, Bhrigu Phukon, requesting Union Home Minister Buta Singh to send a Central team to the tripartite talks.

While the Congress-I is undoubtedly trying to use the Bodo agitation to embarrass the AGP Government, the latter cannot be absolved of its own share of the blame — for not understanding and responding to the sentiments and aspirations of the Bodos, for gross mishandling of the situation by treating it as a mere law and order problem and for widening the gulf between the Bodos and the Assamese to an extent that a rapprochement between the two sides, short of conceding some degree of tribal autonomy, seems impossible today.

Indeed, the Bodos have become so bitter that even if the Centre uses the Bodo issue as an excuse to dismiss an elected government, things will not improve, as far as tribal violence is concerned, any more than the dismissal of the Akali Government for its failure to curb terrorist violence and imposition of Centre's Rule could put an end to Khalistani terrorism in Punjab.

To understand the present situation fully, one has to look back to the genesis of the movement for a separate tribal State in Assam. The Assam Land Revenue Regulations provided for creating tribal belts and blocks in the tribal majority areas where non-tribals would not be entitled to possess or acquire land. Actually, the alienation of the tribals from their land went on unchecked. Educated tribal youths could not get jobs—even

those reserved for them. The appointing authorities would invariably give the excuse that "no suitable (tribal) candidates were found".

The tribal areas remained pockets of greater backwardness in a backward Assam. As the pressure of non-tribal population increased and poverty forced the tribals to part with their lands and move elsewhere, the tribal concentrations became dispersed and the tribals perceived a threat to their "identity". Being basically farmers, the uprooted tribals usually migrated to reserved forests where, in the eye of the law, they were "encroachers", liable to be evicted. And quite often they were and are — evicted.

It is in such circumstances that the Plains Tribals Council of Assam (PTCA) was formed in 1967 as a militant organisation to defend the tribals' rights and interests. The PTCA boycotted the general elections in 1967. In a by-election to the Lok Sabha in Kokrajhar in 1968, the PTCA's boycott call was so effective that not a single vote was cast in as many as 117 of 138 booths. It was demanding a separate tribal State of Udayachal to be carved out of Assam. In 1974, the PTCA launched a mass movement which was suppressed by the then Congress Government using strong-arm methods under the direction of the then Home Minister Hiteswar Saikia.

It is worth recalling a small incident of those days—an incident illustrative of the official attitude to the tribals. Newsmen were told that the police had raided some tribal "hideouts" and captured "huge quantities" of "sophisticated" arms and ammunition which had been put on display at the Secretariat. One found all that the police had laid out on a table were bows and arrows, spears and tangis—all part of normal tribal gear. Even a janti (betel-nut cutter) had acquired, at the hands of the police, the elevated status of a "sophisticated weapon"!

One upshot of the 1974 movement was that the Bodos gave up the Assamese script in which the Bodo language used to be written. As a spoken language, Bodo has no script of its own. They wanted to adopt the Roman script but after a lot of persuasion by the Centre adopted the Devnagari script in 1976. The rejection of the Assamese script further widened the gulf between the Bodos and the Assamese. This happened when the PTCA's influence on the tribals was at its peak.

In the 1978 assembly elections — the first after the Emergency — the Janata party came to power in Assam, with the PTCA as its coalition partner. PTCA leader Samar Brahma Choudhury became a Minister in the Janata Government, while Charan Narjary was elected to the Lok Sabha. This was the beginning of the decline of the PTCA. Soon, the tribal youth became critical of the PTCA leadership.

vidual leaders. They were accused of having betrayed the tribal cause and of feathering their own

nests after tasting power.

Differences also arose in the PTCA leadership. Meanwhile, Indira Gandhi had come back to power. A PTCA delegation went to Delhi to meet her in 1984. Shortly after their return to Assam, the PTCA split. Benoy Khunggur Basumatary, a prominent PTCA leader, broke away to float his own party the United Tribal National Liberation Front (UTNLF). Basumatary later told this correspondent that in Delhi, the PTCA leader had verbally assured Mrs Gandhi that they would not press for a separate State. This "gross betrayal", Basumatary said, led to his parting company with his former -colleagues. Geographically, the split meant that the PTCA's influence became limited to Goalpara's Kokrajhar sub-division (now a full-fledged district), while the UTNLF's territory was the Udalguri area of Darrang.

In 1979 started the anti-foreigner movement in Assam, spearheaded by the All-Assam Students' Union (AASU) and the All-Assam Gana Sangram Parishad (AAGSP). Though it was basically a movement of the Assamese caste-Hindus, various other sections also joined it, like the plains tribals. Like many tribal students, Upen Brahma, now President of the militant All-Bodo Students' Union (ABSU-UB), was also in the thick of the agitation. Brahma was a fellow student of the present Chief Minister, Prafulla, Mahanta, at the Guwahati University. Grapevine has it that after the installation of the AGP Government, Mahanta offered a petty government job to Brahma which he indignantly

When the Assam Accord was signed in August 1985, the tribals expected that the lands earlier taken away from them would be restored. Clause 10 of the Accord said that existing laws would be strictly enforced to prevent illegal occupation of land in tribal belts and blocks. Also, all those illegally occupying tribal lands would be evicted. The implementation of this clause, it may be noted, is the responsibility of the State. The Centre has nothing to do with it.

During its three years in office, the AGP Government not only did nothing to implement this clause. it also failed to spend the allocations in the Tribal Sub-Plan, to take tribal boys in jobs reserved for them or make provision for drinking water in tribal villages. As the post-Accord euphoria died down, the tribals started feeling that the AGP Government's attitude to tribals was no different from that

of the Congress.

As disillusionment spread among the tribals and tribal-non-tribal relations in tribal areas deteriorated, a militant caste-Hindu organisation of the Assamese named "Asom Ajanajati Suraksha Parishad" (Assam Non-tribal Protection Committee) was formed. This was followed by clashes between the Parishad supporters and tribals. A UTNLF memorandum to Chief Minister, Prafulla Mahanta, alleged that the Protection Committee had been set up with the direct support and encouragement of the AASU and the AGP. The

Allegations of corruption were made against indifferent indefined in defined in the abolition of Chapter X of the Assam Land Revenue Regulations which provides for eviction of non-tribals illegally occupying lands in tribal belts and blocks. In other words. the Committee is opposing Clause 10 of the Assam Accord. The AASU and the AGP's hand behind the Committee is all too evident. That the AGP Government is not interested in protecting tribal interests is

In the cirumstances, it did not take much time for tribal disillusionment to turn to bitterness and then to active militancy. The ABSU which had been formed in 1984 soon took over the leadership of the restive tribal youth. The PTCA and the AGP were alarmed at this development. They engineered a split in the ABSU, when a rump led by Gangadhar Ramchiary broke away. But the main body of the ABSU remained intact under the leadership of Upen Brahma and is now known as the ABSU (UB).

The ABSU (Ramchiary group) has very little influence and strength and is looked upon as a paper organisation kept up by the PTCA and the AGP Government. In fact, a complicating factor in the tribal agitation is the intense animosity between the PTCA and the ABSU(UB). The tribal area in the Kokrajhar and Barpeta districts have been "divided" between the two rival organisations. The PTCA, of course, controls a very small part but an ABSU man going to a PTCA area or a PTCA supporter entering ABSU territory is sure to be killed. The PTCA also claims that the ABSU(UB) is not the sole representative of the Bodos and that in any future talks, the PTCA must be invited.

The ABSU(UB)'s movement started in February, 1987, with the slogan "Divide Assam Fifty-Fifty". It demanded the northern half of the Brahmaputra valley (that is, the area north of the Brahmaputra) for the proposed tribal State, leaving the southern half to the Assamese. But in November, 1988, at Bansbari conference, ABSU(UB) gave up the slogan of "Divide Assam Fifty-Fifty" and gave a call for Bodoland. It also adopted a 92-point charter of demands. However, after a meeting that ABSU President Upen Brahma had with Chief Minister Mahanta at Kokrajhar on January 3, this year, the ABSU agreed to "suspend" 89 of its 92 demands.

The three substantive demands which now form the main plank of the ABSU agitation are:

(1) Creating a separate State with the status of Union Territory for the plains tribals in the northern valley of the Brahmaputra, making the river the natural boundary, under Articles 2 and 3 of the Constitution.

(2) Creating District Councils in the tribal compact areas in the southern valley of the

Brahmaputra.

(3) Creating a Regional Council for the Bodo, Rengma and other non-Karbi tribes within the Karbi Anglong Autonomous District Council "because the non-Karbi plains tribes such as Bodos are not allowed to enjoy the constitutional provisions as tribals in Karbi Anglong Autono mous District". (Karbi Anglong is a hill district and the Karbis are a hill tribe.)

The first, in essence, is the demand for Bodoland.

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The principal argument against it is that nowhere on constitute a majority. According to the 1971 Census (no census could be taken in Assam in 1981), the following is the percentage of Bodo and other non-Bodo plains tribes population in the north bank districts of the Brahmaputra.

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	District	Bodo	Non-Bodo Tribals	Total
1	Kokrajhar .			
	Gossaigaon	19.10%	3.48%	22.59%
H	Kokrajhar	32.28%	1.92%	35.00%
	Sidli	35.29%	0.99%	36.29%
	Bijni	20.86%	0.49%	21.36%
	Dhubri			-212470
	Golakganj	0.35%	0.37%	0.73%
	Bilasipara	4.44%	0.89%	0.73% 5.34%
1	Dhubri	1.41%	2.36%	3.77%
	Barpeta		2.3070	3.11/0
1	Sorbhog	10.01%	5.06%	15.08%
1	Barpeta	1.59%	1.59%	3.20%
	Patacharkuchi	11.38%	9.17%	20.560/
	Tarabari	0.52%	0.02%	20.56%
	Nalbari	0.52/6	0.02/0	0.55%
1000	Nalbari	1.40%	1 700/	2 2007
1	Barama	24.17%	1.79%	3.20%
7	Tamulpur	17.62%	4.14%	28.31%
	Lakhimpur	11.0270	7.45%	25.09%
		0 5001	20 5101	
	North Lakhimpur	1.56%	20.51%	21.08%
	Dhakuakhana	0.56% 4.43% 4.89%	33.40%	37.84%
	Dhemaji	4.89%	36.10%	41.01%
	Sadiya (Jonai area)	6.43%	59.24%	65.68%
	Bihpuria	1.01%	13.88%	14.89%
	Sonitpur			
N.	Dhekiajuli	3.39%	5.83%	9.23%
13	Tezpur	1.26%	3.14%	4.41%
10	Rangapara	1.65%	3.79%	5.45%
1	Chutia	0.93%	2.17%	3.10%
1	Behali	1.21%	2.39%	3.61%
H	Gohpur	4.03%	10.95%	15.00%
	Darrang		70	10076
13	Paneri	19.92%	6.74%	26.67%
	Mangaldoi	1.53%	1.54%	3.08%
-	Udalguri	31.57%	2.41%	33.99%
U.S.	Majbat	9.92%	2.90%	12.83%
	Kalaigaon	2.79%	17.15%	19.95%
	Dalgaon	10.64%	4.56%	5 219/
33	Majuli	nil	37.25%	5.21%
1	3	1111	31.23/0.	37.25%

Source: "A Brief Note on the situation arising out of the agitation launched by ABSU (UB group)", Government of Assam, March, 1959, pp 53-54.

It will be noticed from the above that only at Sadiya (Jonai) do the tribals constitute a majority -65.68 per cent, but, it is a majority of non-Bodo tribals, the Bodos accounting for only 6.43 per cent of the total population. The non-Bodo tribals, naturally, will not like to be forced to live in what is avowedly a "Bodo"-land.

Another fact that should be borne in mind is that since 1971, there has been a steady migration of non-Bodo and non-tribal population in the tribal areas, further diluting the proportion of Bodos and tribals in general to the total population.

However, the argument that the Bodos are a small minority and therefore their demands can be ignored is untenable because this minority has succeeded in totally jeopardising normal life in the men. I rotally jeoparding the Assam Government has all but ceased to run.

As stated earlier, the ABSU's movement started in

February, 1987. But it got a tremendous fillip a the north bank of the Brahmaputraitie by heya Bada Founde tom laterna and the Reme of the 1988, when nine Bodo women were gang-raped by some Assam police personnel. The police and the administration first tried to hush up this shameful incident and dismiss it as a malicious propaganda by the Bodos to demoralise the police force engaged in fighting tribal violence. Thanks to the vigilance of the Press and the political parties, the facts could not be suppressed. It sent a wave of shock and revulsion all over the State, especially among the tribals. That incident was a turning point in the Bodo movement.

In the last six months, the ABSU (UB) movement has gone through three more or less distinct phases. In the first phase, small wooden bridges connecting village roads were burnt to prevent police access to tribal villages. Simultaneously many primary school buildings were also burnt down so that the police and the CRPF could not set up camps in the villages.

In the second phase, Assamese civil officials and police personnel were terrorised to leave the Bodo areas. Blowing up of railway tracks and burning of government buildings started. With the Assamese police having been forced to withdraw, the CRPF had to take over policing in the tribal areas.

In the third phase, the ABSU (UB) tried to set up a parallel administration with its own "police force" named Bodo People's Force. The BPF is led by one Phukan Chandra Bodo who hails from the Mangaldoi sub-division of Darrang district. It has a claimed membership of ten thousand. Membership was given to tribal youth after a "do-or-die" oathtaking at ceremonies held in some 170 centres during November-December, 1988.

One feature of the tribal, violence in Kokrajhar has been the selective attacks (burning, etc.) on Assamese houses. A large number of Assamese from Nalbari, Barpeta and Mangaldoi areas have migrated to Kokrajhar and have occupied tribal land. It is this section of Assamese which generally became the target of attack and not those who are old residents.

During the third phase, armed police parties were ambushed and their rifles looted. Some banks and shops were also looted. "Tax collection" from tribals and non-tribals, particularly non-tribal businessmen, was also stepped up. And throughout this period there were longer and longer periods of bandhs, paralysing life in tribal areas.

The tribal violence, however, has been met by what former Assam Chief Minister and Congress-S President Sarat Chandra Sinha called "State terrorism". Vivid accounts of police atrocities on tribals have come out in the Assam press. To give an instance, an Assamese gentlemen was killed in Kaporpara village in the Udalguri area on March 7. Two days later, the police retaliated. As they entered the village, firing indiscriminately, all ablebodied tribals fled to the nearby Bhutan hills. Only the old and the infirm could not flee. Ten of them fell to police bullets in this village.

Village after tribal village was burnt to a house. Kerosene and chemical fertilisers were poured in (Contd. on page 22)

Sustainable Development and Regional Co-operation

AKMAL HUSSAIN

SOUTH Asia is at a conjunctural moment in its history. There is growing awareness to-day of its tremendous human and natural resource potential, as well as growing evidence of the undermining of this potential as the result of current unsustainable development strategies. Can we grasp this moment, and together devise a new development path? There is an urgent need for development strategies through which we can overcome poverty and the trend towards environmental degradation. In short the question is, can we achieve in our development thinking and practice, a new relationship between man, nature and growth?

In this paper I have attempted to explore these questions albeit in a rudimentary fashion. In Part-I is examined the resource potential of South Asia and the extent of its degradation. In Part-II is presented an outline of an approach to sustainable development through establishing a link between two levels of development praxis: Grassroots organisation on the one hand and Regional Co-operation for human and

natural resource development on the other.

1

The traditional paradox of South Asia, that of a resource rich region inhabited by poor people has been given a new dimension as a result of the development strategies pursued in the post-independence period. The particular form of economic growth initiated by post colonial elites in this region is such that the very resource potential which could have been harnessed to overcome poverty is instead being rapidly eroded. In this section we will indicate first, how the peoples of South Asia remain deprived of basic necessities even after forty years of independence, and that the particular mechanism of economic growth in operation in this region may well be increasing poverty rather than reducing it; second, we will attempt to provide summary evidence of the considerable potential in terms of human, land, energy and mineral resources; finally we will indicate recent evidence to show that in many cases this resource potential is being not only under-utilised, but is being rapidly eroded as the result of ill-conceived development strategies.

Dr. Hussain is a member of Pakistan Prime Minister's Committee on Economic Policy. This paper was presented at the Seminar on Regional Cooperation for the protection of environment in South Asia, organised by the Indian Council for South Asian Cooperation, in New Delhi (February 13-15, 1989). 2. Economic Growth and Economic Deprivation in South Asia

Let us consider briefly the indicators on diet. drinking water and health in South Asia. If we use as the criterion of poverty a calorific consumption equal to 90 per cent of the FAO/WHO requirement for an active working life, we discover that 50 per cent of South Asia's population is living below this poverty line.1 A more acute criterion for poverty is 80 per cent of the FAO/WHO norm. The calorific intake in this definition is not enough to prevent stunted growth and serious health risk. As much as 21 per cent of the population of South Asia falls below even this line of abject poverty.2 Not only is almost half the population of South Asia suffering from diet deficiency, but it appears that the number of people in this category are increasing over time. Over the period 1970 to 1980, there was a 38 per cent increase in the number of people in South Asia who were unable to consume 90 per cent of the FAO/WHO calorific requirment. The increase in the number of people was even greater in the category of acute poverty, that is, calory levels in which a person is subject to stunted growth and serious health risk (80 per cent of the FAG/WHO norm). The increase in the number of people in this category over the period was 47 per cent. In both categories, not only was there an increase in the number of people but an increase in the percentage of the population below the poverty line (the change in the percentage share of population being 0.03 to 0.02 respectively).3

The state of health of the majority of the population of South Asia can be judged by the fact that 68 per cent of the population in the region does not have access over safe drinking water. Consequently large numbers of people are dying due to water borne diseases such as Cholera, Typhoid, Dyssentry etc. In Pakistan for example, 40 per cent of all deaths are due to water borne diseases. Similarly infant mortality rates in South Asia are amongst the highest in the world. For the region as a whole the infant mortality rate is 99.2. This is high even when compared to all developing countries where the average is 71, and very high when compared to the industrial economies where the

average is 9.

In a situation where a large proportion of the population of South Asia is subject to serious health problems due to inadequate diet, and where the frequency of disease is compounded by 68 per cent of the population being without safe drinking water, the gross inadequacy of medical facilities intensifies the suffering of the people. Thus, for example, the population per physician in South Asia is as high

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The fact that even after forty years of economic growth in the post-colonial period, the majority of the people of South Asia not only remain deprived of basic necessities but that poverty is increasing, points to the nature and form of growth which has occurred within highly centralised state structures so that the poor sections of society have not been able to participate in either plan formulation or plan implementation. Apart from this the tax system has essentially relied on indirect taxation with a narrow tax base, such that a large proportion of the income of the landed, trading and industrial elites has escaped the tax net. The result is that while government tax revenues have been inadequate to launch major poverty alleviation programmes, a large proportion of even these limited revenues have gone, into running the state apparatus itself due to its centralised structure. The growth process both in the urban and the rural sector has been predicated on a highly unequal distribution of productive assets which has generated a growing concentration of incomes in relatively few hands. The provision of cheap credit by successive governments to the economic elite, combined with the tendency of the latter to achieve greater control over the production process has led to growing capital intensity (mechanisation and automation) in both agricultural and industrial production. Consequently, built into the mechanism of growth itself, have been two tendencies: (i) an increasing inequality in income distribution between owners of capital and labour, (ii) a decline in the employment generation capability of the economy for given levels of investment.

2. The Resource Potential of South Asia

Let us consider in summary form the resource. potential of South Asia in terms of human, land, river and mineral resources. South Asia has 20.1 per cent of all scientists, engineers and technicians who are engaged in research and development, in the developing countries of the world.8 This points to the considerable potential for creating new knowledge and of using it for economic and social development. In terms of enrollment in higher education, South Asia has on average 410 persons per 100,000 of the population, compared to 168 per 100,000 in China, and 35 per 100,000 in South Korea. So even though the quality of higher education in many cases is poor, South Asia is adding to its reservoir of University graduates at a much faster pace than China, but a much slower pace than South Korea. (The latter of course has a much smaller population base). In terms of the labour force also South Asia has a huge potential, having 40.2 per cent of the working age population of all developing countries.10

The considerable cultivable land potential and the degree of its under-utilisation can be judged from the following fact: South Asia has 25.4 per cent of the cultivable land resources of the developing countries, but produces only 23.3 per cent of the total cereal output of all developing countries.11 The

differential between the potential and actual agriloping countries as a whole and about twenty times cultural output is under-stated when presented in the figure in the industrial market economies. differences in cropping patterns across the developing countries. Area specific potential and actual output show a considerably greater differential. For example, the potential agricultural output in the Indus Basin is estimated to be three times the current output.12

South Asia as a whole has a forest resource of 64.421 million hectares (closed plus open forest). It also has the largest river and irrigation system in the world. According to conservative estimates made by the UN statistical office, the technical potential for hydro electric power in South Asia is 124,750 Megawatts. That this may be highly underestimated is indicated by the fact that the same source gives for Pakistan a hydro-electric potential of 19,600 MW. On the other hand an alternative source (Prof. Kaparov) suggests a potential of 40,000 MW on Pakistan's main rivers alone.13

An examination of the mineral wealth of South Asia shows it is rich in some minerals such as mica, iron, ore, coal; managanese, natural gas, and graphite. At current levels of production, on a world output basis, India ranks first in mica, sixth in coal, iron-ore and manganese.14 Pakistan's major mineral product is natural gas with reserves of about 406,000 metric tons cement, and to a much lesser extent chromite and salt. There have also been recent discoveries of copper but estimates on the size of the deposits are not yet available. In Sri Lanka gem stones and graphite are the principal minerals, with gems accounting, for five per cent of all exports. Sri Lanka's graphite in terms of its purity is regarded to be unique in the world. It is many times more valuable on a per ton basis than amorphous graphite found elsewhere. 16

3. Resource Potential Undermined

In the preceding sub-section we gave a brief description of the human and natural resource base of the South Asian region. It appears that the region is rich in terms of trained manpower, cultivable land and irrigation resources as well as mineral wealth. Yet much of this potential is not merely under-utilised. However what is even more serious for the future is that because of inadequate attention by policy makers to food access, health, education, employment and ecology, the human and natural resource base is being rapidly eroded. For example, because of inadequate diet for lactating mothers and poor health facilities, South Asia is losing 99 children before the age of one for every 1000 children born. Similarly millions of children and adults die due to water borne diseases, since 68 per cent of the population of South Asia does not have access to clean drinking water. A large proportion of the population that manages to survive lives in a state of malnutrition due to inadequate access to food, and is subjected to life long suffering from curable diseases because of inadequate health facilities. Of those few who manage to survive these hazards and succeed in acquiring an education. face unemployment in growing numbers. This is intensity of production for India, Pakistan and Bangladesh has increased significantly, while for Sri Lanka it has remained more or less unchanged. Thus it can be suggested that the human resource base of South Asia is not merely under-utilised, but

is being actually eroded over time. When we consider the cultivable land resources we discover that due to inadequate attention to drainage and soil conservation, desertification is occurring at a rapid rate. In Pakistan, for example, 25 per cent of the unirrigated cultivable land has been converted into desert as the result of soil erosion;17 similarly in India, 27 per cent of the national area is affected by erosion which is occurring at the rate of 75 metric tons per hectare per year. 18 When we consider the more valuable irrigated area we discover rapid depletion occurring due to salinisation. For example in Pakistan 40 per cent of the irrigated area is already affected by salinisation. 19 Over time 100,000 acres per year are being lost to salinisation as a result of rising of the ground water table.20 In India 27 per cent of the irrigated area is affected by salinisation,

and in Sri Lanka 23 per cent. The depletion of the existing relatively low forest in South Asia gives similar cause for concern. In Pakistan out of a total forest area of 2.5 million hectares, 1000 hectares a year are being depleted of trees; India with a total forest resource of 56 million hectares is losing its forest at a faster rate (0.3 per cent per year) with 1,32 million hectares per year being deforested; Bangladesh with 0.9 million hectares has a depletion rate of 0.9 per cent per year; Sri Lanka with a forested area of 1.66 million hectares is depleting this resource at the high rate of 3.5 per cent; Nepal with a forest area of 2 million hectares has the highest depletion rate in South Asia, losing 4.1 per cent of its forest every year. These depletion figures are based on data provided by forest departments of the countries concerned and are highly understated. To get an idea of the degree of under-state-ment consider the case of India. The forest department figure of annual deforestation is 132,000 hectares. On the other hand, India's Centre for Science and Environment reports that according to satellite data India is losing not 132,000 hectares a year, but as much as 1.3 million hectares annually.22

A brief review of the population levels of rivers in South Asia gives an equally bleak picture for this vital resource. Large deposits of fecal coliform have been detected at significant levels in the major rivers of Bangladesh, India and Pakistan. What is even more serious is that in these rivers toxic metals such as cadmium and mercury have also been detected. The evidence shows that large sections of some of the major rivers of South Asia have been rendered toxic.

The great challenge facing each of the countries of South Asia is to devise a new strategy of sustain-

able development. That is, a development process that while improving the material welfare of all the because of declining employment generation capathat while improving the material welfare of all the bility of the South Asian economies. The capital people of the south Asian economies. The capital people of the south Asian economies. natural and human resource base. At the institutional level, such a sustainable development strategy will involve developing and linking together two levels of social organisation: the micro level grassroots organisation and the macro, or national/ regional level. Let us briefly examine each of these levels.

1. Participatory Development at Grassroots Level

What is required is a decentralisation of administrative economic and political power, through the creation of effective grass roots organisations. This is necessary so that the local community can have control over the decisions that affect their economic social and natural environment. Sustainable development and effective democracy means organising the local community to participate in the multifunctional tasks of formulating and implementing such projects as income, generation, health, drinking water, education, soil preservation, water management and forestry.

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It is only an integrated and participatory approach at the local level that can create a new relationship between man, nature and growth for sustainable development. Such an approach would make the people both the subject as well as the object of development, and in so doing would unleash their tremendous creative potential. This potential is rooted in the shared historical experience of balancing their own needs and forms of production with the imperatives of preserving the natural environment. The valuational framework within which participatory community effort can occur is based in living folk, culture where the self is experienced as fundamentally related with all living beings and with nature. This experience of the self in the present market culture of greed and exploitation has been banished to the margins of popular consciousness. It only finds resonance in art and poetry. Yet the universal values of tolerance, humanity and harmony with nature which are inherent in folk culture can be re-deployed to constitute the valuational underpinning of a new social effort at the grassroots level.

The approach of participatory development through grassroots organisation that I have suggested is not just in the realm of theory, but has already been attempted in a wide range of cases in South Asia: from the Comilla experiment in East Bengal during the 1950's, the Grameen Bank, to the Bhoomi Sena in India, and the Agha Khan rural Support Programme in Gilgit and Skardu of Northern Pakistan. Experiments in urban community organisation have also been successful in a number of cases, such as the Orangi Project in Karachi, Pakistan, or the Working Women's Forum in Tamil Nadu, India. One of the more interesting examples of a linkage between social values, forms of production and the environment is provided by the Bishnoi Community in Rajasthan. As Michael Tobias writing the New Scientist shows, the spiritual identity of the

Bishnoi is "linked to the land and its capacity to (b) Huma support them...they are an important model of ecological prudence that much of the world can learn from." As discussed in impressive growth.

What these attempts at participatory development by local community organisations indicate is that the micro level institutional basis of sustainable development is a very real possibility in South Asia today.

2. Regional Cooperation for Sustainable Development

If the microlevel grassroots effort is to achieve sufficient geographic coverage it, must be combined with macro level initiatives at the national and regional levels to arrest the processes of ecological damage and to preserve and develop the human resource potential of South Asia.

(a) Natural Resource Preservation

A number of countries in South Asia share common rivers, in some cases common water-shed areas and also mountain ranges. Consequently deforestation of water-shed areas in one country can lead to flash floods and soil erosion in the downstream country. Similarly throwing untreated industrial waste into the river up-stream can cause toxicity and the consequent elimination of fish species and mangrove forests downstream for another country. Again major wind currents cross in a West-East direction during winter across the international boundary between Pakistan and India, while in summer the monsoon winds move in the opposite direction from India to Pakistan. Accordingly the location of thermal plants with untreated sulphur exhaust in one country would pollute and render unhealthy the air in the neighbouring country. These examples suggest the need for regional co-operation to counter-act the largescale processes of ecological damage that are in operation in South Asia. (See Part-I of this paper). Some of the areas in which Regional Co-operation could occur for the protection and preservation of the environment are:

(i) Joint effort at re-forestation of water-sheds, and the treatment of industrial and urban effluent waste could help reduce soil erosion, devastating flash floods and toxicity of rivers.

(ii) Sharing of bio-saline research and technical know-how on controlling desertification of soils, (for example, use of Halogenic Phradophytes for controlling salinity); technical know-how on the use of ecologically safe industrial technologies.

(iii) Sharing of information on water-flow of rivers, especially flood forecasting.

(iv) Engaging in joint projects for the development of Himalayan resources, and prevention of deforestation and soil erosion on the mountain slopes.

(v) Sharing of information generated at the grassroots level on traditional knowledge systems for sustainable inter-action with nature.

(vi) Sharing know-how on earthquakes, and their forecasting.

(b) Human Resource Development

As discussed in Part-I of this paper inspite of impressive growth of GNP over the last 40 years in South Asian countries a large proportion of the people live in a state of poverty. There is a high frequency of disease and death due to the deprivation of basic necessities. Unhygienic drinking water and inadequate diet result in the stunted physical growth of a large number of South Asia's children. Lack of access over education prevent even larger numbers from fulfilling their intellectual and creative potential.

As Pakistan's Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto proposed in her speech at the recent SAARC Conference in Islamabad, it is time now to launch a major collective effort at a human resource development programme in South Asia.

In order to take practical measures for the fulfill-ment of this great endeavour a Working Group could be established to begin work on the ways and means of formulating and implementing such a project. The Working Group could be composed of some of the finest talent available in South Asia in the fields of Health, Engineering and Economics. For delivery mechanisms it could examine the prospects of developing and/or supporting grass roots organisations in South Asia and establishing apex organisations to provide quick support whenever bottlenecks occur at the micro level.

Perhaps Regional efforts for Human Resource Development could be focussed on providing clean drinking water, preventive medical facilities, housing, education and productive employment close to the home. The financing of such a project could be done by establishing a Regional Support Fund, with contributions not just from each of the South Asian countries, but from all the developed countries and multi-lateral aid agencies.

TO avoid going over threshold levels of environmental damage and consequently entering into a permanent poverty trap, there is urgent need for devising new development strategies which directly address two crucial dimensions:

1. Preserving and developing the human resource potential by providing access to food, health, education, housing and employment.

2. Preserving and protecting the natural environment.

The institutional framework for such a development strategy would involve first building grassroots organisations through which the community at the local level can participate in project formulation and project implementation. There needs to be a decentralisation of administrative and economic power so that the people at the local level can participate in the decisions that affect their economic, social and ecological environment. The second dimension of the institutional framework is an initiative at the regional level in South Asia, to collectively, alleviate poverty and environmental damage, through the creation of regional level insti-

and overcoming bottlenecks to their development.

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Barun Das Gupta: Bodo Agitation

(Contd. from page 17)

wells. Kerosene and dired were sprinkled over stored grains, so that when the tribals eventually came back, they would get nothing to eat, not even a drop of water to drink. There are published reports of tribal women having been stripped, and their faces burnt with cigarette butts. Men had their testicles crushed with lathi blows. All these reports remain uncontradicted. The all-party goodwill mission of Assam assembly members, led by Speaker Pulakesh Barua, last month saw for themselves scenes of police atrocities and heard tales from the tribals. They were visibly moved.

In a memorandum recently submitted to Assam Governor Harideo Joshi, the Bodo People's Action Committee has alleged that over 500 "innocent" Bodo men, women and children have been killed by the Assam police, over a hundred women including minor girls have been raped and property worth Rs

10 crores destroyed.

To escape arrest, many ABSU (UB) leaders have now taken shelter in Shillong, North Bengal and Bhutan. The ABSU (UB) is in close touch with the All-Cachar and Karimganj Students' Association (ACKSA) of the . Barak Valley and the Tai Yuba Chhatra Parishad (TYCP), an organisation of Ahom youths, in Upper Assam. The three bodies have formed a Coordination Committee with its headquarters at Shillong.

The TYCP, it may be mentioned, is demanding the reservation of two Lok Sabha and 36 State assembly seats for the Ahoms before the coming Lok Sabha elections. Another organisation of the Ahoms - the Ahom Land Demand Committee - has recently been floated, reportedly with the blessings of some Congress-I leaders. The ALDC stands for a "Ahomland" comprising Dibrugarh, Lakhimpur, Sibsagar, Jorhat and Golaghat districts

As things stand today, the Bodo movement cannot be viewed and dealt with as a purely law and order problem. A political solution has to be found through discussions between the Bodos and the Assam Government. The main Opposition parties in Assam seem to have veered round to the view that some form of autonomy has to be granted to the tribals, though its modalities will have to be worked

The State Committee of the CPI-M is of the view that "the tribal people have taken to the path of agitation and direct action after waiting in vain for decades for relief from abject poverty, degradation and end of discrimination and inequality to which they are subject". The party thinks that the deployment of para-military forces cannot solve a socioeconomic problem and that while a separate tribal State is not acceptable as it is "not founded on reality", the rights of the ethnic tribal minorities have to be recognised by granting them regional and local autonomy.

The CPI State Council is also for giving autonomy to different tribal communities. The Congress-S wants to ensure greater participation of the tribals in the administration of the State at all levels as the first step to removing their sense of alienation and creating a sense of belonging. The Revolutionary Communist Party has proposed, again as a "first step", the setting up of Tribal Development Councils, to be elected by tribals, at district, subdivisional and block levels. The Councils should be entrusted with the responsibility of spending the money allo-

cated in the Tribal Sub-Plan.

One hopes the proposed tripartite talks between ABSU (UB), the Assam Government and the Central representatives will pave the way for a political settlement. To begin with, both ABSU (UB) and the State Government mut agree to stop violence and raids in order to create the proper climate for negotiations which are likely to be protracted because any formula that may be worked out should apply not only to Bodos but to other plains tribals like Rabhas, Lalungs, Dimasas, etc. as well. And for such a formula to be evolved, all concerned will have to sit round the table — not only the ABSU (UB) but other organisations of Bodos and of other plains tribes as also the tribes as also the political parties.

22

PEN-PORTRAIT

Bandi Sriramulu

GITA RAMASWAMY

WHAT makes a man what he is? What makes a man, a leader of others, possessing a will and unparallelled courage and defying the possibilities

open to his brethren?

Bandi Sriramulu is one such. In Yacharam Mandal of Rangareddy district in Andhra Pradesh, here is a man - a leader of the Scheduled Castes who has now become a leader of all Dalits, a man whom even landlords dread, a man whose courage and self-respect is truly remarkable. Who is yet soft-voiced, with a twinkle in his eye, and dimples in his cheeks. Clad in the whitest of white - the colour that was always denied to SCs, he listens to the woes of his brethren from villages over 20 kilometres away, and escorts them to the Police Station or the Mandal Office fearlessly. In an area where the older SCs still get up when the Patel landlord/ (Dora) approaches, in an area where the older SCs still remove their chappals and quickly hide them behind their back when the patel approaches, here is a man whom no patel would dare but treat as an equal.

Part of the answer to the enigma that is Sriramulu lies in his father, Bandi Ramaiah (still alive and kicking at 75 years) was a jeetagadu in his native village of Nandivanaparthy. Illiterate and worse, orphaned at the tender age of 16 years, he was picked up and enrolled in the Nizam's razakar force, after he had worked as a servant in an officer's house. His son remembers that the father's monthly earnings were Rs 2 when he first started work. Working in the military, Bandi Ramaiah learnt that caste did not necessarily limit a man's life elsewhere as it did in a village. When he returned in 1947 and took up cattle-grazing as an occupation, he

faced the first real tests of life in his village.

One day, there was a drama in the village, held in front of the temple. As usual, the SCs squatted on the ground, while the Reddis and Brahmans sat on the stone seats of the temple. Bandi Ramaiah too sat on the stone seat. The police patel, who was also the then MLA's father called out in rage; "Can't your eyes see when the patels are present?"
To which Ramaiah replied: "If I am an untouchable, the Gods should make me disappear before your eyes." He refused to get up, and the entire gentry walked off in a huff to report to the police station. Remembering that Ramaiah was, after all, a military man, they dared not thrash him then and there. After all, he may have resisted! For-tunately, the S.I. didn't think this outrage deserved a thrashing and the incident passed into village folklore soon after. Remember this was in the late forties when SCs were still kowtowing to the higher castes, "I catch your feet lord, I am your slave"

(Literally translated from the sirgsong Telugu chant

'Nee kallu mokutha, Nee banchan Dora').

Sriramulu was educated in the local school. In 1965 when he was a small child, he remembers yet another incident. He took food from home to the fields where his father was grazing the cattle. His father called out to him to fetch water. Sriramulu, in all the innocence of childhood, fetched water from the nearby komati's well. The outraged komati (is eqal to bania) beat up the young child. When the child ran weeping to his father, Ramaiah took the then inexcusable step of jumping in the well, clothes and all saying: "If I am an untouchable, all this water should disappear". While the other SCs stood around and beat their breasts, "Ayyo! Ayyo! They are caste people! you are committing a great sin.'

The old man did not give in.

To spare his son of other dehumanising experiences probably, Ramaiah sent his son to study at Hyderabad. There the young lad quickly realised: "in the city, we are equal, in the village, we are not". When his mother died Sriramulu stopped his studies to return home and help his father. He used to work as an agricultural labourer. Sriramulu meant trouble for the landlords. "In those days, the daily wage was just one kilogram of paddy".

Sriramulu remembers, "But they used to advance debts for our weddings, and give stale left-overs to the women who cleaned the courtyard. When I tried to raise the daily wage to 2 kilograms of paddy, the other labourers did not cooperate. The landlords got the other SCs to criticise me. I was

broken hearted.

I wanted to leave my village, sell the house and settle in Manchal, where I had heard that, due to the Communist movement, SCs had self-respect.'

In 1971 occurred the now-famous tea-glass incident that really shaped Sriramulu. "In our hotel run by a komati, there were 14 separate glasses for tea for the SCs: the seven Mala. (Mala is a subcaste) glasses had yellow marks, and the seven Madiga (Madiga is another sub-caste) glassess had red marks. For six months, I took my reserved glass, threw away the tea and paid the money. I never told my father about it. Three days after sankranti, I don't know why — my mood changed. I took the tea and broke the glass. I broke all the 14 glasses. I paid for all of them, though. After the 14th glass was broken, the komati told me there was no more tea. When he served tea to a Reddy, I snatched it from his hand, and drank it. About 14-15 people from the upper castes immediately gathered and tried to beat me." Sriramulu wrecked no less havoc - he took up a burning log and broke

Reddys gathered, and beat up the young man with cycle chains, sticks etc. (Sriramulu still bears the scars of the beating on his back.) When an elder from the SCs came to request restraint, they beat him too. As Sriramulu lay unconscious, the Reddys took him for dead, threw him into a disused house, locked him up for two to three hours.

When someone ran and told Sriramulu's father, Ramaiah reacted violently. He did not go to the house, where his son lay, supposedly dead. He went instead to the tea-hotel and burnt it completely. When a Reddy tried to remonstrate, he beat him all the way upto his house, and destroyed that too. It was only later that he went to see his injured son. To this day, the komati has dared not put up his hotel again.

In 1974, Sriramulu enlisted in the army, fed up that other SCs were not willing to break the traditions. In his 10-year long service, he worked as a bull-dozer driver, posted from Bangalore to Nagaland to Chandigarh. "I saw all of India in my army service - I learnt discipline and order. But the army doesn't require any thinking - only work must be done. In the army, one is always subordinate. I was getting Rs 1400 a month, but I had to kowtow and salaam all the superiors. What was this life, I thought? When I beat an officer who was rude to me, I was discharged."

Sriramulu returned to the village, a holy terror to the landlords. He was active in the CP-M and was a Taluk Committee member. He left the CP-M when they effected a divorce between an eloping couple a kurma girl and Muslim boy. He didn't believe caste should be a factor. Yet he maintained and continues to maintain good relations with the CP-M.

In 1985, when a small Agricultural 'Labourer's Union for Ibrahimpatnam taluga was started as a non-political formation, Sriramulu was an enthusiastic founder. The first general body meeting of the Union was held in his village in March, 1985. From then there was no looking back for Sriramulu. The strike of the farmhands at Nandiwanaparthy was a successful one, with wages raised, and four-month's back wages paid to the labourers, in front of the tahsildar. This was followed by a strike of the women agricultural labourers, who achieved their minimum wages of Rs 8. The landlords had called in the police, and the CI was threatening the people who had stopped outside labour from entering. It was when the women finally pushed the sarpanch into the mud of the paddy fields, that the landlords decided to yield.

The next issue taken up was that of a komati widow, Subbamma, who was deprived of her inheritance and forced to sell mirchi bajjis in the local toddy compound. Subbamma had not much of a case legally, as the lands were shown to have been

up all the glasses in the hotel. Wern while ya Blinthy our sale away a before her husband. When Subbamma Reddys gathered, and beat up the young man with went around the village and begged the women to help her, the SC women took up her cause in a remarkable way. They refused to allow the robbers of her inheritance to cultivate their fields, they boycotted them, waylaid them, harassed them...Police was brought in, in a big way, but women stood up to them in a rare show of defiance. "How would you like it if you died, and your widow was left to rot?" they told the APSP men. When Sriramulu was arrested for an offence the women had committed. over 30 women went to the Ibrahimpatnam police station, 25 kilometres away and gheraoed the then CI. Finally, the trio who had deprived Subbamma of her rightful share gave in, and an honourable settlement was reached.

By now, Nandiwanaparthy, under the leadership of Sriramulu had become a byword in the whole taluga: and many were the people from other villages who trooped in to seek his help. When the Mandal elections came by, in March 1987, Sriramulu was one of those who filled his nominations. The other contenders were powerful landlords supported by the political parties. Sriramulu went from village to village with his small band of youth on cycles. His message was simple: "I am like one of you. I have nothing to give you - no liquor packets, no money. But if I win, you will have won. I will give you a seat when you visit me in the Mandal Praja Parishad office. You will not have to stand by the door, and call out: 'Patela!' '

He was unfazed by the heat of the other's campaign. They had banners, vehicles, cassettes, liquor packets, and the support of the caste elders. "If I win, we SC will get self-respect. If I lose, we will not have lost anyway. We have made our point.' 200 women of Sriramulu's village campaigned for a full day from dawn to dusk in a lorry they had paid for themselves. They were the daughters of other villages settled after marriage to the sons of Nandivanaparthy. They went back to tell their people their mothers, fathers, brothers, cousins: "Sriramulu is our man. If you don't vote for him,

we will consider all our ties with you cut."

Surprisingly, Sriramulu got a considerable number of votes, granting that he had polling agents who were illiterate, granting that many of his voters' were rendered invalid because of lack of proper guidance. His failure to win was, however, taken even by the landlords, as the first victory for Dalits who had asserted themselves to stand up independently, for the first time. Sriramulu himself is optimistic: "Now the people know for certain that the landlords fear us — they know that landlordism is just a paper tiger — they won't retreat now even if there is no union. This is how change will take place now. Our people are marching forward, and no one can stop us."

Dang: Housewife's Tragedy

(Contd. from page 14)

What is necessary is that all parents having daughters should draw appropriate lessons from this incident. Even more than

that, young girls-married or of marriageable age-must be able to get to the moral of this true but tragic story. They must learn to respect their own sex and to face and fight bravely any indignity instead of trying to find a way out

by ending their own lives. And should not our education system be geared to uproot feudal viewpoints on the women's question by inculcating amongst the youth of both sexes a deep sense of equality?

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Nehru, Congress and Secularism

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The present paper is a modest attempt at understanding Jawaharlal Nehru's commitment to secularism — both in philosophy and practice. It aims at analysing the shift in Nehru's perception of a secular state in India.

How far will it be justified to maintain that while Nehru was a committed secularist of the agnostic variety, he was an orthodox? Will it be fair to hold him responsible for allowing the concept of secularism (of the Western variety) to be diluted to adjust to the conservative ethos of the national movement? Was he a hypocrite who showed enough radicalism in his early writings but failed to translate his ideas into practice when he was at the helm of affairs? Could we, instead of blaming him, sympathise with him and give him the benefit of having been a prisoner of the Congress Party which for various reasons could never actually become a specially radical party, and consequently accommodated all conservative, orthodox, and even obscurantist elements? Or lastly, was Gandhi solely responsible for having a conservative influence on Nehru in this regard?

It is perhaps not possible to answer all these doubts that have been raised from time to time. Nevertheless it is quite possible to look at the whole subject afresh. It seems that broadly there are two views about Nehru's contribution to secularism. One is that he was shrewd enough to use the words which meant different things to different people and consequently could be given different interpretations at will. This view also paints him as a hypocrite who deliberately borrowed modern phrases such as secularism (socialism is another such phrase) to steel the limelight from genuinely secular (and socialist) groups/parties. The other view goes to the other extreme of claiming that he was a genuine secularist who was really responsible for bringing secularism into the Constitution via the Objective Resolution etc. This view also condones all acts of commission omission of Nehru with regard to secularism, and maintains that he was a prisoner of circumstances in general and (conservative leadership) of the Congress party in particular. Also at times the tendency is to strike a "balance" to take an "objective view" of Nehru's commitment to secularism.

The present attempt is along neither of these lines but it is also something of them all. In fact it is an effort at probing how far Nehru was able to carry his commitment to secularism and how and why he could not be different from Gandhi and other leaders in keeping the state away from, if not opposed to, religion.

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A simple reading of An Autobiography (1935) convinces a reader about Nehru's commitment to secularism. Nehru's understanding of the term is not very vague in his autobio-"Secular" graphy. He is not prepared to give much concession to the religious ideologies. Not only is he opposed to religious dogmas, rituals and fanaticism but even "spiritual" content of religion does not appeal to him much. The very claim that the Scriptures are divine and revealed irritates him. He would better appreciate the human achievements of great Gurus and prophets rather than treat them as messengers of God. Nehru clearly was agnostic if not an atheist. Even his liking for Buddhism which is sometimes confused with his inclination towards a religion, was partly a philosopher's reaction to the serenity of the Buddha. The absence of the concept of God in Buddhism perhaps also charmed him. To argue that he appreciated humanistic aspect of religion, does not take us anywhere as no one, not even a total atheist, would condemn "humanism" of any variety. It would be nothing but trading in words to insist that his definition of religion was very different from ours. He himself had disliked the use of the word "religion" with different meanings (moral or ethical) by Gandhi, when the latter claimed that those who wanted religion to be separated from politics did not know the meaning of the word religion.

It is perhaps, therefore, not very unjust to argue that Nehru, unlike Gandhi, believed in undiluted secularism of the Western variety where there was no scope for mixing up religion with politics. He abhored Gandhi's use of religious idioms and was shocked to learn how Gandhi brought in the concept of divine punishment to explain the Bihar earthquake. Even Gandhi's attempt at giving religious colour to his fasts (by saying that the actual dates of fasts were dictated by God) puzzled him. So much so that even the creed of non-violence, which Nehru appreciated so much, was not "an article of faith" but a matter of "pragmatism" for him. He disliked to link it with religion or any such thing. Even if he was impressed by Gandhi, it was only the latter's capacity to stir the acquiesced masses, and his ever energetic mind which always gave a new lease of life to the freedom struggle, that impressed him most.

Nehru's commitment to secularism is revealed in the Karachi Resolution of the Congress on Fundamental Rights (1931) which Nehru had drafted. "The State shall observe neutrality in regard to all religions". What Nehru abhored in religion was that it lays down social codes and rules about marriage, inheritance, civil and criminal laws, that is complete structure of society, and perpetuates it with religious authority (Glimpses of World History: 1934).

More than this, the use of religion in politics by those whom they led, also convinced him about the desirability of separating the two to prevent the masses from being economically exploited. The life style of the Aga Khan attracted sarcastic remarks from him.

Nehru's disliking for religion's role in "regulating all apects of life" clearly means that it never meant to him as something which could be respected simply because it dealt with private life of "Religions have tried to imprison an individual. truth in set forms, discouraged men from trying to understand not only the unknown but what might come in the way of social effort, preached a philosophy of submission to nature and to the prevailing social order, has checked the tendency to change and progress inherent in human society" - This extract from the Discovery of India (1946) shows that secularism to Nehru was certainly not a diluted concept, which it became later.

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However as one moves to later years, one finds Nehru succumbing to the so-called "Indian concept of secularism" which is generally praised as a positive concept as against the "dry" secularism of the Western variety. One who is impressed by Nehru's emphasis on neutrality to religion in politics, is disappointed to find the same Nehru accepting the idea of "equal respect" to (rather than equal distance from), all religions, including freedom

"to propagate" religious beliefs.

A brief mention of the Constituent Assembly debates may not be entirely out of place here. At least two members of the Assembly namely K.T. Shah and Tajamul Husain insisted on pursuing a policy of "absolute neutrality" towards religion. Tajamul Husain even pleaded for abolishing the practice of wearing religious dresses. However, the most important point that was raised by him was: if religion concerns only the private life of an individual, where is the necessity to allow freedom "to propagate religion"? However, the Constituent Assembly failed to register any impact of Nehru's ideas of pure secularism and absolute "neutrality in regard to all religions" which were so dear to him at one time. It is maintained that he was an agnostic by instinct but could not get his concept of secularism accepted by the Assembly because of "subtle pressure of the religion-minded members of the Consembly". (See S.L. Verma, "Lost Battle of Secularism in India" in Indian Journal of Politics, June 1984, p. 95)

The circumstances created by the Partition forced Nehru to dilute his commitment to secularism, and he virtually became a helpless prisoner of the Congress ideology which had much to do with the Gandhian concept of Sarva Dharma Sambhava,

rather than the Western agnosticism.

While all this is true, how far is it justified to condone the failure of leadership in this regard? No doubt the Congress had all along been not only soft towards religion but had even been using

religion for mass mobilisation. But one expected those whom they led, also convinced him about towards religion which had been promised by leaders like Nehru. If the process could not be halted at the time of independence, one expected at least that no encouragement would be given to religion in public life in the post-independence period.

On the contrary what one finds in the post-independence pronouncements of Nehru is "equal respect for all faiths and equal opportunities for those who professs any faith", 1961. (See Sarvepalli Gopal, ed, Jawaharlal Nehru: An Anthology, Delhi,

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Oxford, 1983, pp. 330-31).

Similarly the manifesto drafted by Nehru (1951) "full freedom to profess and practise While Nehru had never maintained religion". that religion would be discarded altogether from the framework of future India, his tone definitely was firmer in pre-independence days. In a letter to Jinnah, Nehru had assumed that the Congress did not wish to undertake any legislative action in the matter of cow slaughter to restrict the established rights of the Muslims. (See Khursheed Kamal, A Documentary Record of the Congress Government 1937-1939 — Lahore, National Commission on Historical and Cultural Record, 1988, pp. 246-247). Yet the cow slaughter was banned in post-independence (though on economic grounds) in most States ruled by the Congress Party. In his correspondence with Rajendra Prasad, Nehru observed, "it is inevitable that the majority Hindu sentiment will affect our activities in a hundred ways". (S. Gopal, op cit, p. 257) And later he agreed that he was not very happy with the word secular but it was being used for want of a better word. (Letter to PCCs 1954). (ibid., p. 327). He clarified that it never meant a state where religion as such is discouraged. It meant freedom of religion, free play of all religions. Interestingly he contented himself with the proviso that religions should not be interfering with each other. Communalism, was thus defined as something which domination of one community by the other. Thus as long as a particular religion did not dominate over the other, one was insured against the danger of communalism. Interestingly he even guaranteed freedom to proselytise, even though personally disapproved of it. Thus all religions were to be equally honoured by the state (1961), (ibid., p. 328-330)

The purpose of recalling these details is not to blame Nehru for not having done away with religion from public life. It was never intended to be so. All that is being argued here is that the concept of equal respect for all religions that is, Sarva dharma Sambhava, which was actually practised by the Congress Parry in the post-independence period (sincerely or not, is not our concern here) was not in tune with Nehru's own commitment to secularism which was undiluted. One could understand Gandhi, or for that reason leaders like Azad, insisting on "equal that reason leaders like Azad, insisting on respect" for all religions, one could even see some "compulsions" and "limitations" of these leaders in not implementing the Western model, one can even

(Continued on page 3.5)

Tiananmen Square and CPI-M

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THE CPI-M's support to the Beijing massacre has alarmed all those people in our country who are not only socialists but also democrats. In tune with the Beijing butchers the Polit-Bureau of the CPI-M has also branded the massive and non-violent demonstration for democracy as a conspired movement by "counter-revolutionaries". This raises a pertinent question: if we, in India, have a Marxist government and a socialist state will it be the same as in China now or as in the Soviet Union during the Stalin period? The ruling clique of Beijing staged the heinous drama to retain its power. What could be the reason behind this unconditional support which our "Marxists" rendered to them? And that too at a time when Communists all over the world including the Soviet leaders are describing the incidents in China as 'brutal' and 'shocking'. We should search how the followers of the CPI-M, including students, came to justify the slaughter at Tiananmen Square on June 4, the 'Black Sunday' of China.

Gone are the days, when a pro-Soviet Communist could declare the Soviet system as his 'model' or a pro-China activist could plead for the 'Chinese path'. No more does an angry revolutionary claim that 'China's Chairman is our Chariman'. Whatever be the objective reasons for considering the Soviet or the Chinese leaders as their mentors as well as the sole authorities of Marxism-Léninism; or regarding the Soviet or the Chinese pamphlets as addition to the 'Communist Manifesto', it is all the more true today that the Indian Communists have grievously erred in tagging themselves on to the Soviet or Chinese leaders uncritically. They used to accept the Soviet or the Chinese positions on theory and practice without proper check. Thereby the Indian Communists not only did harm to their own cause but also deviated from the essence of Marxist thinking Lenin considered Marxism "all powerful, because it is true." But the Indian Communists did the same with Marxism as our people did with Ganga. Since Ganga is ever pure and holy so whatever the extent of rotten stuff poured in it, she will remain as pure as ever: this is the popular belief. Likewise, Marxism is all powerful; therefore, any false theorisation by those practising it cannot weaken it: this is what the Indian Communists under scored. In practice, Marxism was used as a tool to keep the power and prestige of the leaders intact. And this distortion of Marxism was wholeheartedly supported by the followers of Indian Communist movement.

It is an indisputable that the Indian Communist leaders were very much familiar with the evils which

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were growing in the social, political, economic and moral spheres within the Soviet and the Chinese societies. They were also surely aware of the peoples discontent there with the existing state of affairs. But our "Marxists" chose not to discuss those problems from the theortical stand point out of convenience. Instead, they depicted these as 'model' societies using false data and rhetoric. By this way they successfully hid their theoretical incompetency from their cadres and the people following them. This way the cadres became totally ignorant of the reality and believed their dream is as near as the reality in the Soviet Union.

And, why not? If in a market economy everything is saleable, then why should 'ideology' be barred? That also with adulteration so that to earn more dividend by using low-cost labour. This fact our local Marxists know that deformed socialism can't be sold before their cadres and the masses following them. Therefore, instead of calling a spade a spade and initiating a bold discussion on the problems of socialism our Marxists found it handy to keep the followers in the dark.

This phenomenon resulted in two consequences. First, the general intellectual capability of the Communist cadres considerably declined. They became completely unaware of the original, vigorous polemical Marxism as practised in Lenin's time and became accustomed to a codified, strait-jacket Marxism which is the Stalinist legacy. In turn, they were unable to find a Marxist solution of even a simple problem. The general weakness of our communist movement in the theoretical sphere is only the endproduct of this process. Secondly, those honest and hardworking Communist cadres who have still not become mere cogs in the wheel of their partyapparatuses find themselves lost. They feel a sense of disgust and shame when they see everyday in newspapers that earlier whatever they considered as sheer 'bourgeois-imperialist' propaganda about the Soviet Union are all true by tenfold. During the last three years the officially accepted facts in the Soviet Union are really unbelievable in comparison to the previous propaganda: rampant corruption among party and government officials; backwardness of economy; thorough bureaucratism instead of democracy; repression of creative thinking; lack of the freedom of expression and right to get information; innumerable privileges to the party and government officials; growing income disparity; nonexistence of an independent judiciary; the myth of the unity of different nationalities and of the Soviet people as 'a new historic community', etc. Given this situation, the Communist cadres feel morally degraded, and think (if only in private): 'so, this was our real socialism!'

For this moral degradation, should the Indian Communist leaders not be blamed? They can make

only one excuse: they themselves overe not in the know of these developments. But, do they spare the bourgeois leaders or Ministers on the same account? What is more important, the founders of Marxism-Leninism never painted a rosy picture of the future society nor did they convince their followers by wishful thinking. What they did was to analyse the concrete socio-economic realities that existed before them, as it were, irrespective of whether or not the realities were pleasant or bitter. However, it is too much to expect this from our local "Marxists", who had gone through only 'textbooks' of Marxism even at the best of times. What suits them is to show a live socialist heaven to attract the innocent people.

IT is in this backdrop of the low theoretical level of the Commanist cadres and even lower level of their general awareness, can we discuss the position of our "Marxists" on the massacre at Tiananmen Square. When E.M.S. Namboodiripad, General Secretary of the CPI-M and a veteran revolutionary, was asked by a journalist about the student agitation in China (it was prior to the 'Black Sunday') he gave a wonderful answer, saying that he would not comment on such happenings within a socialist country and he would have done it if it had happened in a bourgeois country. Why comrade? Are the feelings of the citizens of a socialist state different from those of the people under a bourgeois regime? One is free to interpret his answer as one wishes, because Namboodiripad is quite famous in giving statements and theorising such as can be interpreted in diammetrically opposite ways, according to the political

exigencies of the period concerned.

But much more astounding was the official statement of the Polit-Bureau of the CPI-M on the gruesome incidents of 'Black Sunday' at Tiananmen Square. At the time when Communists all over the world were ashamed of what the Chinese leaders had done; this loyal Polit-Bureau of the CPI-M supported their action unconditionally under the pretext that the students there had no concrete demand! And that, those tens of thousands of students, with the support of tens of thousands of people all over Beijing and China, were trying to overthrow the socialist system under foreign provocation! This is an example of being "more-loyal-than-the king". Those very mandarins, Li Peng and others, were on records till yesterday that the agitating students were patriots and their demands were 'just'. Suddenly on June 4 they ordered a merciless slaughter of unarmed people. Radio announced 'none died at Tiananmen Square', at a time when the citizens of the United States were watching a live telecast of the slaughter. Then came the Chinese rulers' announcement that the conspiracy of 'a very small group' has been crushed and the 'victory' achieved. After such criminal actions and blatant lies, the statement of the Polit-Bureau of the CPI-M is really shocking, to say the least.

To say that the student agitators had no concrete demands is mischievous. Everybody knows that the agitators had two main demands which were so important that they deserve separate discussion. The

first demand was to guarantee freedom of the pression of the p to socialism. Press freedom is, in fact essential for socialism. If socialism as a system is superior then capitalism, then in addition to new achievements it must incorporate all those positive things achieved under previous systems. This is a simple logic of dialectics. It is an unquestionable fact that adult franchise, freedom of expression, the right to get information, the right to protest, representative institutions were won by people after prolonged struggles. These freedoms and rights remain limited and contracted in capitalism. The power of capital constructs them with the result that the common people do not enjoy their full benefit. What socialism ought to do is precisely to remove this chain of capital so that each person can exercise these rights in the new, superior system. But it is a tragedy that. on one pretext or another, these very positive institutions of capitalism are negated, branded 'bourgeois' while some of the genuinely deplorable institutions of capitalism have survived in socialist societies till date. This is the reason why socialist countries are lagging behind the Western capitalist countries in many spheres. Only now is this accepted in the Soviet Union: hence, the move for restructuring under which Parliament, the right to dissent and press freedom are being restored gradually. However, unfortunately, a large section of Indian Communists, who hitherto considered every speech emanating from the Soviet Union or China as containing parts of Marxist wisdom, is still tied to religious dogmatism of sorts. As a religious communalist considers even something detrimental to his religious preachings as a part of his belief, a rigid Indian Communist regards something just opposed to Marxism as a part of the Marxist doctrine. Thanks to his ignorance due to the efforts of his "Marxist" preachers.

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Freedom of the press in a socialist system can serve also as a safeguard against the arbitrary actions and authoritarianism of the party and government bureaucrats. Till date, all illegal practices and injustices were continued in the socialist societies precisely because the press was kept as a slave of the state and the party officials. Neither could people know of the arbitrary illegal practices not could they try to check the leaders. Thus, unlimited power for leaders and officials (who always want to keep it forever) went on unrestrained. There are lively examples of the Soviet Union and China. Stalin or Brezhnev. Mao or Deng turned into authoritarian-bureaucratic rulers after being accustomed to power, unlimited power. They forget their own preachings so easily. In the case of China instead of accomplishing a real cultural revolution the leaders pushed their people towards darkness where it become unable even to differentiate between a capitalist and a socialist state. This situation in a way was worse than in a capitalist society where the people are able to know of many of the corrupt practices of their leaders, thanks to an independent and competitive press. If some illegal activities had come to light, at some time of other, the people's protest was bound to take place under this or that banner. That is what the Chinese

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martyrs wanted for their country, even at the cost against its Right wing. These were merely tactical of their lives: freedom of the press to reveal the differences on how to win more seats, which led to a truth, expose the illegality of the leaders' activities. split (although, there were other differences as well).

The second demand of the agitators was to end corruption and for making public the incomes and wealth of top leaders. Everybody knows that growing economic disparity is not a part of socialism. A fight to check this tendency is only compatible with socialism. Then what went wrong with those Chinese students, who were singing the *Internationale* while breathing their last? How did our 'Marxists' discover that they were 'enemies of socialism'?

It is essential to get answers to these and relevant questions. If, under a CPI-M government in India, the people ask for press-freedom and end to corruption, would they be treated with bullets? Would demonstrations embodying such demands be branded as part of imperialist conspiracy? The reply appears to be in the affirmative, judging by this party's position on the Tiananmen Square massacre. This is not an accident. The CPI-M had fully supported the Soviet invasion in Czechoslovakia in 1968 and the notorious 'Cultural Revolution' in China in the early seventies.

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IT is also not an accident that the reaction of the CPI on the Beijing massacre is rather different. They had not supported this inhuman action, though this party, too, is feeling shy to condemn it, probably in view of its newly established party-to-party relationship with the Chinese Communist Party. Even in the CPI there are some self-centred bureaucratic leaders who think of democracy as a 'Congressite stuff' and regard authoritarian steps essentially communist. Despite this trend, it is noteworthy that the CPI followers are expressing their anger and criticising the Chinese ruling clique's activities without hestitation. One can see the contrast more clearly in the case of the lower and middle level cadres of the CPI-M and the CPI.

As political organisations these two parties have hardly any difference: be it in their programmes, in their tactics and even in their weaknesses. But where they essentially differ is remarkably at their political cultures. In the CPI-M command delusion methods are applied in relation to the cadres. Frank discussions among lower level cadres are hardly allowed on matters related to higher bodies and leaders or their decisions. By this way it becomes possible to hide the actual motives of the leaders from the cadres. This method enable the CPI-M leaders to engage in unprincipled moves to reap political dividends.

Even the formatic and strengthening of this party is a good example of this method. The major reason for the split in the undivided CPI happened to be the internal differences related to the question of which electoral alliance could be more effective to 'Break the Congress monopoly'. Ever since the victory in Kerala in 1957 the party became the victim of parliamentarism. Some party leaders stated that the chief aim is to break the Congress monopoly, even if this meant having the Jan Sangh or the Muslim league as a partner. Others stated that the best way to break the monopoly was by aligning with the progressive sections of the Congress

split (although, there were other differences as well). But to draw a larger section of the base towards them, the would be CPI-M leaders explained the split in very different terms to the general cadres. Many of the CPI-M leaders after the split including those who would in following years break with the CPIMexplained the split in terms of the CPI being the a party of 'Right Communists' who struggled for reforms via electoral victories whereas the CPI-M struggled for revolution. The bulk of cadres obviously believed this genuinely. The subsequent history of the CPI-M very clearly showed that its leadership was engaged not in revolution, but in trying to win elections by any means. Once they succeeded in 1967 in West Bengal, they put the electoral victories as proof of their 'correctness'. Thus the CPI-M leadership developed a culture of delusion to establish a holier-than-all approach that they could never go wrong, and therefore cadres must believe them without question.

It is not clear, however, what 'evidence' they provided to convince their followers, even student followers, about the 'correctness' of their position on the Tiananmen Square bloodbath. The naive student cadres of the CPI-M's student wing are not only justifying the gruesome slaughter of the brave Chinese martyrs but also asserting that if needed even 80,000 could be killed for the defence of socialism. May the people of India forgive them for they don't know what they utter! At this juncture China has definitely no threat from outside and it possesses tremendous military might. In these conditions which theory of socialism preaches that the demands for the right to information and to end corruption are anti-socialist? If a peaceful and spontaneous satyagraha for one's just demands is anti-socialist, then it is sure that the CPI-M leaders will turn every political concept upside down. Then we can safely assume that in our country too they will gift us with a 'Black Sunday' if they at all seize power at the Centre. They would translate the legacy of Stalin and Deng in India, whom they praise more than any Soviet or Chinese person today.

A question, however, remains. Why do our "Marxist" friends ask, here in India, for scrapping the Press Bill or criticising the arbitrary use of TV and radio by the Government if they can defend the Chinese authorities?

WHY does it happen that a revolutionary party while not in power makes good pronouncements, utters democratic slogans and once in power considers those very slogans as a threat to it? Its leaders put very different meanings in analogous incidents taking place in previous regimes and their own regime. In human history there are many examples to show that movements originated with pious wishes were derailed and got degenerated to such an extent that it became difficult to identify them with their origins. We are now witnessing the bureaucratisation of the working class movements and particularly the socialist states. This powerful (Continued on page 32)

What, then, does the Hindu-Muslim unity consist in, and how can it be best promoted? The answer is simple. It consists in our having a common purpose, a common goal, and common sorrows. It is best promoted by cooperating in order to reach the common goal, by sharing one another's sorrows and by mutual toleration. A common goal we have. We wish this great country of ours to be greater and self-governing. We have enough sorrows to share; and today, seeing that the Muhammadans are deeply touched on the question of the Khilafat and their cause is just, nothing can be so powerful for winning Muhammadan friendship for the Hindu as to give his whole-hearted support to the claim.

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Indo-Pak Nuclear Factor Foundation Considering that Paki-

NILOFAR SUHRAWARDY

NDO-Pak relations from the beginning have been part of a chain - conflict, avoidance of conflict, no-conflict. In the present times they are expected to move towards a higher plane, that is, improvement of relations. Even before this has been achieved, hitches on fronts such as Siachen and Kashmir have begun appearing. Problems such as these may sooner or later subside. The nuclear pursuit of Pakistan is, however, a development which, in the opinion of some authorities, may remain a permanent obstacle in Indo-Pak relations.

In 1976 Khalilzad Zalmay had predicted: "Pakistan will continue its efforts to embarass India in international forums ... that India should open its nuclear installations to international inspection ... By making these demands... Pakistan hopes to gain international support for its position and provide an excuse for going nuclear itself at a latter date." Benazir's nuclear options were clearly evident during her recent visit to the USA, when she rejected President Bush's proposal for an on-the-spot American inspection of Pakistan's nuclear installations.

India has time and again expressed concern about Pakistan's nuclear pursuit. On more than one occasion India has taken a serious note of it. Nuclear power and nuclear weapons being Siamese twins, Pakistan may be 'just a screw turn away from the bomb', or may have 'bombs in the basement'. Yetit cannot be denied that it still is years behind India in the path of nuclear development, and perhaps can never achieve a parity with India. In this light the concern expressed by India about its nuclear proliferation raises ticklish questions. Perhaps India does not want Pakistan to pursue a nuclear policy? Or perhaps, diplomatically India cannot afford to sit back and be a silent spectator to Pakistan's 'nuclear development. If it does so, this may be equated with the fact that India is not bothered about Pakistan's nuclear pursuits. And India even in the most tender and friendly moods cannot let this opinion build in either national or international circles.

This perhaps explains the periodic issuance of statements such as: "We believe Pakistan's nuclear programme is not peaceful, we're very worried."

Benazir, from the day she stepped into office, has been diplomatically ambiguous about Pakistan's nuclear policy and status. "We want to categorically say that it is not our desire to make a nuclear device. We have no such intention... We do not

stan is on the nuclear threshold and is pursuing a nuclear weapons' oriented policy, this expression of Benazir may be described as a more 'diplomatic bluff'. Or in other words, diplomatically, where Pakistan's nuclear status is concerned, Benazir cannot afford to pursue a policy different from that of her much-hated predecessor, Zia.

Zia had mastered the diplomatic strategy of being ambiguous about Pakistan's actual nuclear status. In his March 1987 interview to the Time magazine he had said: "... What is difficult about a bomb? Once you have mastered the technology which Pakistan

has, you can do whatever you like?"

Subsequently in April he said, "Pakistan has not made a bomb, is not working on it nor has any intention to build it."

Benazir's diplomatic stand follows a similar pattern. For instance, there is an opinion that Pakistan's nuclear designs are motivated by a search for a certain level of parity with India. Further, Pakistan's entry into the nuclear club amounts to disturbing 'status quo' or the regional importance of India, a fact which, it is held, is difficult to swallow for India. Replying to a query on this, Ms Bhutto said: "We are, not interested in disturbing the current balance. We are quite happy with it."(!)

On another occasion Ms Bhutto exercised greater diplomatic caution when questioned on Pakistan's nuclear build-up: "If a neighbouring country equips itself with nuclear arms, then naturally pressure comes on Pakistan to give up its reservations on the

Later she added: "But now we endeavour for a regional solution to make the entire region nuclear free.

The political game played and the diplomatic ploy used by Benazir is the same as that of Zia. Pakistan will sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty only if India does. And Pakistan's proposal is that the whole of South Asia must be declared a nuclear free zone.

Studying the subject from this angle, once again the same question rises: is the nuclear factor a permanent irritant in Indo-Pak relations?

AN objective and close study of the subject gives a different interpretation to it. Undoubtedly, writers have been quite prolific in their expansive works on the subject, yet this aspect has been largely under-

Before Pakistan had set its foot on the nuclear path, Indo-Pak relations generally centred around their conflicts. Revelations about Pakistan's secret nuclear weapons oriented designs began to emerge in the world press from 1972. The controversy about Pakistan's nuclear plans became very strong in 1979. Suspecting Pakistan's nuclear intentions, the United States imposed the Symington and Glenn amendments.

Remarkably, though from the beginning India has taken a strict note of Pakistan's nuclear designs, ever since the controversies about Pakistan's nuclear intentions have started becoming stronger, the two have not been engaged in any major conflict.

The author, a freelance journalist, is a Research Scholar in Jawaharlal Nehru University working on 'Pakistan's nuclear diplomacy'.

^{1.} Zalmay Khalilzad, "Pakistan, The Making of a Nuclear Power". Asian Survey, June 1976, Vol. XVI, p 590.

other words the Indo-Pak relations have reached the

stage of no-conflict.

become about Pakistan's weapon-oriented nuclear designs, Indo-Pak relations have moved to a better stage. In the earlier decades, the layman got the impression that the two countries were interested in either demonstration of their strength or in avoidance of conflicts. Today India and Pakistan have moved towards stages of cordiality not deemed possible in the past. This is a major breakthrough in Indo-Pak relations.

It would be a misconception to attribute this change only to the coming of democracy in Pakistan. One cannot ignore the fact that under Zia the ground for improvement of ties had been laid and under Benazir it is being built upon. As for instance, India and Pakistan had agreed in principle three years ago not to attack each other's nuclear installations. (A six point accord was reached between Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and President Zia, during the latter's visit to Delhi, in December 1985.) This agreement was signed during Rajiv's visit to Islamabad last December.

Strangely, but definitely, there is a parallel between Pakistan's nuclear development and improvement in Indo-Pak ties. Initially, when Pakistan had barely embarked upon the nuclear path, the idea of friendly relations had not been considered seriously. Current-

Sharan: Tiananmen Square

(Continued from page 29)

movement underwent a process of bureaucratisation similar to the process the Catholic church experienced after it became a state church under Constantine the

Great, in the 4th century AD.

During their honest and courageous struggle in defence of the toiling people the leaders naturally earn considerable prestige and admiration. Even when the situation changes and the same leaders come to control the apparatus of power, people continue to trust them as before. They do not think of the necessity of any check on their great mentors. And the need of replacing those great leaders with others in due time they cannot even dream, until the leaders' demise. This situation turns those leaders into dictators enjoying unparalleled support of the masses. Only when considerable damage has been done, do the people come to know about the fall of their 'infallible' leaders. Frequently it happened that some safeguards did exist to check this tendency, but followers preferred not to apply even the simplest one.

It must be understood clearly that the origin of power and state power followed the class division of society and this state power has been essentially an apparatus of exploitation tied with the classes of property. Therefore, as long as state power exists its exploiting, coercive characters will not disappear rsgardless of it whether it is wielded by men of property or not. The very characteristic of the state apparatus is found in a specific group of people whose occupation is to rule only. Lenin's favorite definition of the bureaucracy was: "privileged persons diverged from the people and standing above the people". Lenin laid emphasis on the word 'above'. It is this privilege and the conditions that put them above the people, constituted the raison d'etre for the downfall of many revolutionaries-turned-rulers.

ly, when there is no doubt about Pakistan's nuclear designs, efforts are underway to improve relations Interestingly, the more convinced and the world Foundation both reliander and Canada who has taken a serious note of Pakistan's nuclear policy, has also remarked: "We feel that after very many years there is a great chance to improve the relations between the two countries".

Have Indo-Pak relations improved because of Pakistan's nuclear proliferations? It cannot be denied that Pakistani nuclear proliferation's impact on the Indo-Pak relations fits into the theory of In other words Pakistan's 'classic deterrence'. nuclear endeavour has played a role in the avoidance of Indo-Pak conflicts. From this angle thus, it cannot be regarded as an irritant or an obstacle in the betterment of Indo-Pak ties. Though Pakistan on the nuclear front can never be a match for India. acquisition of even a few nuclear-weapons would provide it with considerable counter-value capability. And when two nuclear powers share a border, the best policy is to work for normalisation of relations. keeping the nuclear weapons' genie in the bottle.

From the given angle of analysis it has been

observed that Pakistan's nuclear development has not acted as an obstacle in the improvement of Indo-Pak ties. Rather, the crucial impact has been twofold: one, the prevention of Indo-Pak confrontation; and two, an improvement in Indo-Pak ties is being

looked forward to by both the countries.

These safeguards are an indivisible part of the Marxian theory of state. Though Marx did not see clearly all aspects of this problem of bureaucratisation, because there had not been precedents, nevertheless, having solely the experience of the Paris Commune he drew up two very simple but fundamental rules which contain effective safeguards against bureaucratisation developed to this day by the workers' movement:

(1) The political functionaries of a workers' state must have wages on par with those of skilled

(2) All officials should be elected and subject to the right of recall at any time by those who elect them.

For Marx the aim of these was to prevent careerism, that is, seeking office for the sake of personal advancement. Lenin supplanted the second principle by the rote system rule, so that each person could gain concrete experience in

carrying out administrative functions.

However, in every socialist country and workers' organisation these principles were kept aside, on one pretext or another. And the devastating results are now before our eyes. The Tiananmen Square incident only adds a new horrendous chapter in the great degeneration of great parties. Lenin had warned of it in 1921 itself: "Communists have become bureaucrats. If anything will destroy us, it is this." (Coll,

Works, Vol., 35, p. 549). It did.

It is most unfortunate that our "Marxists" cannot see anything wrong with their Chinese comrades while the entire world is able to view a deplorable phenomenon heightened by the Tiananmen incident Our comrades will, of course, see it when a new set of rulers take over and start maligning the previous leaders. Until then we must repeat: "Deng is victor!" ous over counter-revolutionaries!" and not "Deng and Peng did There are effective safeguards against the degeneration of working class leaders and organisations. Chant sometime in Communication of the degeneration of working class leaders and organisations. chant sometime in future.

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earlier, in the dispute closing down of the section of the Revolutionary Guards responsible for exporting revolution, one can see this factionalism very well. Foreign issues become a football within domestic politics. I think this is certainly true of the hostages in Lebanon which a football in this sense, and it is probably true of political prisoners, foreign and Iranian inside Iran. It makes it very difficult to make any clear statements about what the foreign policy of the revolution will be in the long run because it presupposes there is a stable government, a situation in which people don't use the opening of diplomatic relations with Britain or what Iran is doing in Afghanistan, for their own particular reasons. This factional manipulation of international issues is, of course, true for many revolutionary countries; it's been true of Iran since 1941 as well as before. Foreign issues are part of a domestic conflict.

Finally, revolutions threaten their neighbours because they are nationalistic. They are nationalistic even if they don't say so. In the Iranian case nationalism is one of the ways of mobilising support and the more the revolution gets into trouble, the more it may resort to nationalist appeals. This revolution has in one sense run out of ideas as far as how to run the country domestically is concerned. People are tired of the war. It is not therefore surprising that you are seeing a greater nationalistic tinge. Iran, for example, is playing a much more active role in UNESCO trying to promote study of the Persian language. I remember interviewing Vazdi, the then Foreign Minister, soon after the revolution, who left me in no doubt that the Gulf was to be called the Persian Gulf; there was no truck about 'Arab-Persian' Gulf or 'Islamic' Gulf or any of this sort of thing. This nationalism is something which, disguised more or less as Shiite universalism or Islamic universalism, would certainly be a factor in Iran's foreign policy, and I think explains part of the Iranian interest in Afghanistan. After all, Afghanistan is an area of traditional Iranian cultural, political, and military influence and it would be quite appropriate under the guise of Islamic universalism, that it should become so again.

LOOKING very briefly at the current situation, Iran plays a role in Lebanon: but this is clearly conditional for practical reasons on continued good relations with Syria, and it is very uncertain how longthat would last. As long as it does last, one can assume that Iran will be able to export revolution there and play quite a significant, organised, role in a country which is a long way from its own frontiers. In relations with Iraq, stalemated since the war, the impression one gets is the Iraqis have decided there is no point in signing any agreement as long as Khomeini is there. They have decided to wait for a more reasonable, or if you like, more pliable or weaker government and then push forward with an agreement. They put their foot down on the three related issues of freedom of navigation in the Gulf, defini-

the Shatt: this has in effect stymied the UN peace process. Iran has accepted the navigation and dredging as part of a broader process, but will not yield on the frontier. It does not seem there is an immediate prospect of the war restarting, but you don't have to have a very long knowledge of Middle Eastern history to remember what happened last time when over-confident leaders relied on a 'no war, no peace' situation: both sides are certainly maintaining their forces in readiness and both are building up something which is a significant new aspect of the Middle East, namely their domestic arms production capabilities particularly. One of the most important features of this war was that of intermediate range ground-to-ground missiles, and the Iraqis and the Iranians are putting a lot of effort into developing these. I can't believe it is all just to put in museums. One cannot see any progress there, and if this is the Iraqi view, that they are not going to negotiate till Khomeini has gone, we will have to wait some time. Of course, the Iraqi stance assumes what is highly dubious, that a weaker government in Iran could make a more sensible or acceptable peace than a stronger one.

Two other areas of recent development. One is the USSR Like all students of Iranian foreign policy, I have been reading and re-reading the Imam's letter to Gorbachev in which he tells him to study Islam and praises him for the Islamic content of perestroika. As an instance of saying two things at the same time, it has many wonderful elements in it, ending up with praise for good-neighbourliness; but the important point in it is that it says clearly that, for the moment, Iran is willing to deal with the Soviet Union as not being a great satan, as not being the same as the United States. Secondly, he implies that they share a common interest in opposing what Khomeini calls Islam-i Amrika 'i, 'American Islam'. American Islam means the US-backed Peshawarbased Afghan guerrilla groups that seem set to challenge the Kabul regime in the next few months. Whether this comes to anything, whether this is just another version of the Iranian insistence that Saddam Hussein be removed and so on, and it will all end up in the dustbin of history, remains to be seen. This is, however, clearly a new and quite surprising development but one, which as I say, has a nationalistic component as well as a specifically Islamic one.

On the Gulf itself, Iran, which has had bad relations with some of the GCC countries, has stopped threatening them in any direct way for quite some time. The flare up with the Saudis after the Mecca incident, after which the Iranians said they wanted to take custody of the holy places away from the Saudis, has passed by. One can expect, barring accidents, and there could well be accidents, that the Iranian revolution will make its peace for the time being — that's all one can say — with the GCC countries. This is all the more so as the GCC and the Iraqis have made clear that Iraq is not planning to join the GCC, and the GCC states are apprehensive about an exultant Iraq.

What are the prospects, talking with all circums-

pection? Iran is in a weak position internally, and internationally, as we know, there is a more pragmatic mood. Iran needs peace and it needs foreign economic assistance. It needs to be able to divert its resources from war to peace. Secondly, looked at from the calm viewpoint of St. James's Square, Iran does not have any major quarrels with its neighbours. It has one territorial dispute about where to draw the line on the Shatt al-Arab, and the Iranian position on this is, I think, the reasonable one, though it may not prevail. This is the only substantive territorial issue. Iran could, but I don't think it will, maintain a position of no war or peace with Iraq for a number of years. Its relations with its other neighbours are, at the moment, reasonable. Iran was upset by the election of a woman as the Prime Minister of one neighbouring country recently, not least because she is the daughter of someone who had good relations with the Shah. They would not like to see a king or 'American Islam' come back in Kabul - both of these would be discomforting. They have upset the Turks on some issues but the Turks have maintained quite good relations, Relations with the Soviet Union are 'reasonable' for the time being: nice letters to Gorbachev, even while executing hundreds of pro-Soviet prisoners. So, in one sense there are no major issues which require immediate resolution as far as the neighbours are concerned. Thus the prospects for a more cautious foreign policy for the time being are strong.

NEVERTHELESS there are reasons for putting the other case, with three I shall conclude, all of them perfectly obvious. One is internal instability. Anybody wishing to challenge a post-Khomeini regime would seize on foreign issues, Dast-i Amrika, dast-i shuravi the 'hand' of America, the 'hand' of Russia, the 'hand' of the British will doubt be features of the Iranian foreign policy debate; one saw this in all the controversy which even Khomeini couldn't contain about the Irangate opening. If Irangate was a problem in Washington it was certainly also a problem in Tehran: the difference was that Khomeini had more authority to quell the dispute than the occupant of 1800 Pennsylvania Avenue. Internal instability will continue and this will prejudice any con-

sistent foreign policy.

Secondly, there is a problem which would have existed whether or not Iran had a revolution, which is: here is a country of over 50 million; it has got a very high birth rate and there's going to be 70 million in a few years time. Iran is much larger than any of the other non-Soviet countries around it, except for Turkey, it is a country with a long sense of cultural identity, with a long sense of its own civilisational but also strategic role. We have seen the Iranian army fight a war in a credible way for the first time since the middle of the eighteenth century, and it is a country which, for all its ineffi-ciencies and internal problems, is still a major regional force. How the other countries in the region, the Afghans, the Pakistanis and the Arabs above all, are going to live with this country is a

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGangotri on internally, and major question: it began to be posed under the Shah and is posed whatever regime we have with Khomeini and afterwards. I do not get the impression, particularly from the Arab world, that its neighbours have come to terms with this. You can stereotype it as a sort of 'Israel of the east', but it is not an Israel of the east: it is an Islamic country, it has ten times the population, or more, of Israel, and the kind of social and ideological challenge which it poses to Arab states is in some ways much greater than that which Israel poses. This is something which neither the Iranians nor the Arabs, I think. have come to terms with. Here again there are stereotypes, such as that of 'Iranian expansionism'. For what it is worth, every country in the region is expansionist in one way or the other; I can't think of one which is not. Interfering with each other's internal affairs is part of the cut and thrust of normal Middle Eastern politics. Sovereignty has little salience in that region. The Iranians are no worse in this respect than anybody else; but they do happen to be larger than anyone else and remain quite confident despite the problems they have faced in the war with Iraq.

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There is a third point of caution which I would make which I take from the history of other revolutions, for what it's worth. This is that revolutions have an odd way of disappointing those who think they are going to start to be reasonable. There is a thesis I would offer here, without any scientific or intellectual validity whatsoever: the thesis of the decennial paroxysm. This states that after about ten years, when revolutions look as if they are going to settle down and pursue more moderate domestic policies and stop alienating the peasantry and the traders and to treat foreign diplomats better and do all the normal things, just at that point they produce some quite different policy and start on a process of more radical internal change. This is partly because they need to regalvanize themselves, and hence get into new confrontations with the outside world. There are no laws of history, but it so happens that this applies to virtually every revolution, for no reason of necessity than I can think of: the French produced Napoleon after ten years, Stalin consolidated himself, launched the Five-year Plan and the Third Period of the Comintern at the end of ten years, the Chinese went off on the Great Leap Forward, Cardenas relaunched the Mexican revolution, Castro went off on his ten million tons, and the Ethiopians started deporting hundreds of thousands of peasants and 'villagising' many others. I am not saying it will apply in the Iranian case, but I think it does remind us that just at the point when you would expect revolutions to start calming down and being more moderate, they may well do the opposite. If this coincides with a frustrated peace with Iraq and the prospect of another war, and with the passing of Khomeini who has held the factional ring even if he has not come up with the answers, then of course the prospects for an Islamic version of the decennial paroxysm are all the greater.

I trust that we shall all convene in ten years time to see whether this has in fact taken place.

Pradeep Kumar: Nehrupicke Seeulapican foundation horom parison gotas the Ravan Raj British Raj,

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understand some logic behind rejecting a concept that had developed under different circumstances in the West; but then how does one explain Nehru as a radical and rationalist as against Gandhi as a conservative? It is possible to argue that Nehru, unlike Gandhi, never mixed politics with religion and he merely allowed equal respect for all religions with the right to propagate and proselytise. But then does it not ultimately lead to its own logical end, and religion creeps up in politics, as actually did happen in Congress politics? Nehru's perception of society as the one where lines of cleavage are economic and not religious, and "the Hindus, the Christians, the Muslims and the Sikhs are the suffering units of the hungry Indian masses who cry loudly for succour" (1937), was undermined by the religious cleavages which were encouraged if not created by the soft attitude the Congress held towards all religions. Thus from secularism, it in fact, became "co-sectarianism" or "multicommunalism"

One is tempted to conclude that whenever the electoral considerations so demanded, even Nehru and not merely the conservative leaders of the Congress — was forced to compromise with pure secularism. Even in the pre-independence days when the Congress felt the necessity to enroll the Muslims in a big way, and consequently started the mass contact programme among the Muslims, it had to rely on the *ulemas*, (Muslim theologians), most of whom were orthodox and even obscurantist religious preachers and exercised considerable religious influence on the devout Muslims. They were also used in the past at the time of some byeelections (1937-38). (Khursheed Kamal, op cit, p. 219). These ulemas were certainly not politicians and therefore could not have been used for making purely political speeches. These charges of the Muslim League were not denied by Nehru but instead he said the Congress could not disown its old Khilafat colleagues. (ibid, p. 222-23). Even with regard to the tri-colour, Nehru maintained that it represented unity of India. By the latter he meant "unity of all communities" in India.

It seems that the challenge posed by the Muslim League brought the Congress nearer the ulemas and such Muslim organisations as the Majlis-i-Ahrar, All-India Momin Conference, All-India Shia Conference, Jamiat-ul-Ulama etc. On the other hand, the activities of the Hindu Mahasabha, particularly in the intervening period between the Non-cooperation and the Civil Disobedience movements, forced the Congress leadership to play the Hindu card. The criticism of some Mahasabha leaders by the Kashi Pandits was fully used by the Congress to denounce them at the time of elections. (Gyanendra Pandey, The Ascendency of the Congress in Uttar Pradesh, 1926-34, Delhi, Oxford, 1978, pp 80-81.) The Kumbh fair at Allahabad (1930) was used to exhort the Hindus to demand ban on cow slaughter. Services of purely Hindu religious leaders were accepted to exhort the Hindus against the British imperialism. The use of such festivals as Holi, and (ibid) naturally brought in a lot of religion into the Congress politics. It is perhaps partly on account of this that the Civil his bedience, despite its having been well organised compared to the Non-cooperation movement, failed to every much response from the Muslim dominated areas.

One can thus conclude, with some hesitation of

One can thus conclude, with some hesitation of course, that the Congress leadership (including Nehru) failed to resist the impact of a conservative social ethos and compromised on most occasions with the ideal of pure secularism which tended to be neutral towards the religion rather than honouring all religions alike. Even leaders like Nehru could not do much to resist this. Whether an alternative to this was possible in the light of the rather conservative movement which thrived on the use of religious idioms, is difficult to say. One may be taking the benefit of hindsight in blaming the leadership too much in this regard.

Rajmohan Gandhi: Sri Lanka

(Contd. from page 3)

the dignity, autonomy and protection of her Tamils is in Lanka's own interest and also in the interest of Lanka's relations with India. Three, India - the people and the government — must draw a clear and firm distinction between autonomy and justice for the Tamils on the one hand, and secession on the other. The former aims can and will get Indian backing; secession cannot. Four, the Government of India must accept the sway of the Government of Sri Lanka over the whole of the island. This means, among other things, that any discussions between the Government of India or Tamil Nadu with the Provincial Government of north-east Lanka must take place only with the knowledge and consent of the Government of Lanka. Five, in recognition of proximity and interdependence, the governments of the two countries must maintain the closest consultation with each other, utilising for the purpose the channels of diplomacy rather than those of the mass media. Finally, even if one or both of the governments act foolishly, citizens of India and Sri Lanka, whatever their language or religion, should do what they can to maintain friendly links and reduce bitterness and suspicion. (Courtesy: The Hindustan Times).

Rajni Kothari: Opposition

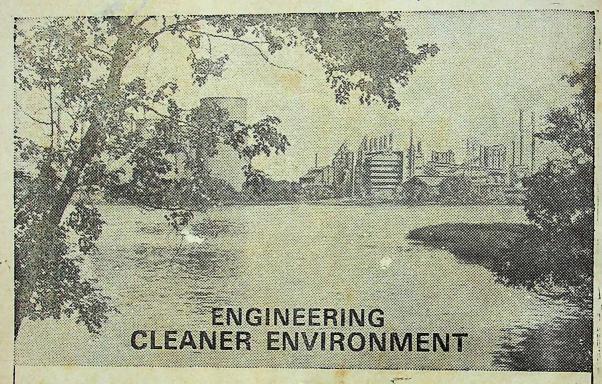
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an alternative will be both an end to Indian democracy and an end to the Indian State as an independent entity and of course an end to India as a unique cultural expression. Under Rajiv Gandhi all of these are likely to be swamped by alien ideas, influences and interests. Can the Opposition gird itself, despite all its compulsions and constraints, to wrest power from this alien regime and restore to the country and its people a truly authentic and "Swadeshi" structure of self-government?

One of the besetting ills that has plagued the Opposition, and prevented it from achieving a sense of common and shared endeavour has been its incapacity to come clear with an agenda that can be agreed upon, which appeals to diverse sections of the people and is simple and 'self' evident. I have tried to provide some thoughts towards the construction of such an agenda (I have deliberately avoided drawing up a long list of 'points') and a simple "call to the nation" that is able to communicate the essence of such an agenda.

[Courtesy: Indian Express]

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 - Composite DR-EAF Steel Plant, Sunflag Iron and Steel Company Ltd, Eklari, Maharashtra
 - Misurata Iron and Steel Complex, Libya (including green belt devolopment, landscaping etc.)

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